

HOUSING

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MODERN HANGING GARDENS OF BABYLON

PYRAMID SKYSCRAPERS FOR PARIS

If all the plans that are being proposed for the "improvement" of Paris are carried out it will be difficult indeed to recognize that ancient city and that capital of the world of pleasure and delight.

One of the latest proposals emanates from a French architect, M. Mongermon, who has recently proposed to the city authorities that a vast part of the center of the city, extending from the Place de la République to the Louvre and between the Gare St. Lazare and the Place de la Concorde, be razed, and on this site vast gigantic skyscraper apartment houses be built in the shape of pyramids, stepped back at each story so as to provide adequate light and air, and attractive terraces for the people living there.

M. Mongermon has evidently taken to heart Daniel Burnham's oft-quoted advice to city planners "Make no little plans", for what he proposes is certainly on a magnificent scale. If this scheme is carried out—which we very much doubt—it will be the second time within a century that the entire aspect of the city has been radically changed. It was only about 50 years ago that Baron Haussmann applied similar radical treatment to a vast area of Paris when, in carrying out his plans, they abolished 200 streets and tore down 32,000 houses for the creation of the "Grand Boulevards". And before Baron Haussmann, Louis XIV had scrapped many ancient houses when he created the Place Vendome, while Napoleon in 1802 cleared away 40 ancient streets and demolished 500 houses when he created the famous Rue de Rivoli.

If the scheme now proposed is carried out, hundreds of streets which cross each other will be done away with and vast numbers of buildings razed to the ground. On the site thus cleared this architect would build 18 monster skyscrapers each capable of housing 20,000 to 40,000 people. If the scheme should prove successful he then proposes to extend the same system to other parts of the city, notably, the left

bank of the Seine and Montmartre with its labyrinth of streets and alleys.

Each one of these skyscrapers will, in fact, become a city of considerable proportions as each one is to house from 20,000 to 40,000 people. Eighteen of these units would accommodate 540,000 persons, assuming an average population of 30,000.

The scheme envisaged by this architect contemplates broad gardens surrounding each apartment building on all sides, with terraces fronting each individual apartment—what probably is the nearest approach to the ancient “hanging gardens of Babylon” that the modern world has seen. In reality, a pyramid of superimposed dwellings, topped by a set of roof gardens.

It is proposed that on the main floor these super-apartment buildings shall have theatres and motion pictures houses, while the basements will be taken up with garages and parking facilities. There will be 6 restaurants on the main floor, 2 post office stations, butcher shops, grocery shops and a milk dispensary. It is planned to make each building a self-contained city.

The scheme, of course, is an entirely feasible one if the people of Paris want to inflict upon themselves such monstrosities as New York City would be glad to escape. It seems hardly likely that Parisians, with their sense of the beautiful, and their objection to buildings out of harmony with the architectural scheme of their city will ever tolerate such buildings. Heretofore every attempt to destroy the skyline of Paris by individual builders has been frustrated by the Prefect of Police and by the building laws which keep down all buildings to a uniform height of practically 8 stories.

In view, however, of the serious housing shortage which exists in Paris—it is estimated that 2,000,000 people are suffering from inadequate housing facilities at the present time—there is likely to be strong pressure exerted by influences that would profit by the erection of such buildings to break down existing standards and secure a relaxation of the laws so as to permit the erection of such buildings.

Knowing France and Paris, we can hardly believe that this scheme is likely to be realized.

THE DIFFICULTIES OF GOVERNMENT-AIDED HOUSING IN FRANCE

Recent dispatches from Paris with regard to the operation of the Loucheur Law,* enacted a year ago, throw some interesting side lights upon Government-aided housing in practice.

* See “*Housing*”, December, 1928, p. 246.

The advocates of cheap money loaned by the Government to enable workers to build their own homes, as a rule, lose sight of the fact that cheap money has to come from some source and does not spring out of the ground. It must come with a shock to many people to learn that under the operation of the new French law the Government is borrowing the rather enormous sum of 1,990,000,000 francs (\$79,000,000), paying 6% interest on it and loaning it out in turn to home builders at 2% interest. Obviously, somebody has to pay the 4% difference, \$3,160,000 a year—a very considerable sum—which of course can come from only one source and does come from only one source, viz. the pockets of the taxpayers of France. If this sum were assessed directly on each taxpayer when he paid his taxes we doubt very much whether the practice would continue.

In addition to thus providing money way below the market rate, and supplying 80% of the necessary capital, the Government by Parliamentary decree exempts the new homes from taxation on both land and improvements and also exempts the occupants of these houses from income tax for a period of 10 years.

Some of the difficulties that have been already encountered in the operation of this law emphasize the inherent objections that there are to the Government entering into this field. They have been encountered before in other countries and will be encountered again. One of these is the difficulty of determining whether a person who asks for this Government aid is entitled to it. Under the law no person earning a salary above 50,000 francs (\$2,000) a year is permitted to benefit by the scheme.

The Government is already finding it difficult to determine what the earning capacity is of the various people who apply to it for help in home building. While the salaries of civil employees can be easily verified, they may have other sources of income that are not so easy to determine. Inasmuch as the law specifies that all "Frenchmen of small means" may benefit by its provisions, the first question that has been raised is "What is a person of small means?" As illustrative of the difficulty of determining the earning power of various people in France there is cited the case of official guides who make as much as \$40 a day. Another instance cited of the difficulty of determining people's incomes is the case of salesmen and sales women in fashionable clothing establishments, couturier houses, whose incomes officially are listed at \$2,000 and less per year, but who actually drive motor cars of their own and are known to be in receipt of annual incomes of \$10,000 to \$15,000 per year, due to the large fees and tips received from overseas buyers.

These are but some of the difficulties to be encountered when Government steps into the field of private enterprise.

SWEDEN GETTING AWAY FROM GOVERNMENT AID

Sweden, in common with all European countries, though a neutral in the great War, felt its effects. During the first two years of the War the housing market was not much affected by the changed conditions. At the beginning of 1917, however, a sudden change took place, and it became essential to stimulate the production of houses and prevent a too rapid increase in rents.

Building activities in Sweden had been steadily falling off from 1912 to 1917, the number of new dwellings erected in 275 towns in Sweden in 1912 having been 8,143 which diminished to as low as 5,132 in 1915 and to 6,818 in 1917. Taking the rate of 1912 as the index figure of 100, it is thus seen that the production of new dwellings was reduced to an index of 63 in 1915 and of 84 in 1917.

Similarly, with the number of rooms provided. In 1912 the total number of rooms provided in the new building operations in these 275 towns were 27,206. This shrunk to 17,111 in 1915 and to as little as 19,168 in 1917. Using the 1912 figures as an index basis of 100, it becomes evident that the index of rooms provided had become reduced in 1915 to 63 and in 1917 to 70.

In order to stimulate the building of dwelling houses the Riksdag (Swedish Parliament) granted during the years 1917 to 1919 sums varying each year between 2 and 4 million Kronor* to be paid at the discretion of the local authorities as a State subsidy to builders.

Owing to a tightness in the money market in 1920, the difficulties of financing building operations increased, and in addition to new subsidies granted that year of 4,000,000 Kronor, and in the following year of 6,500,000 Kronor, the Riksdag allotted for each of these years an additional sum of 15 million Kronor for the establishment of a special State Housing Loan Fund. Out of this fund loans were given against second mortgages up to 50% of the cost of the building, and subsidies to an amount not exceeding 15%, with a total maximum of 50% for both. These loans and subsidies were administered by the local authorities in the municipalities concerned.

A year later in 1922, 11½ million Kronor was added to this fund. At the same time, it was decided that the State subsidies, which had hitherto been given free of interest and without obligation for repayment, should no longer be so given.

* *Krone*=26.8 cents.

In order to raise the funds for these subsidies the Riksdag in 1920 decided that an extraordinary special building tax should be levied upon existing buildings in towns and urban communities during the years 1921 and 1922. This tax was after certain deductions fixed at 0.2% of the value of the building (not including the value of the land), and new buildings were exempted from it. The tax brought in a revenue of about 6 million Kronor each year.

The following year, the Government proposed to the Riksdag that the Government Loan Fund should be increased for the year by a further 5 million Kronor. At the same time it was recommended that the interest rate on loans from this fund should be reduced from 5 to 4%, and that any income resulting from the special tax on buildings that had not been allotted should be available for additional subsidies to builders who might build houses during the period of highest prices. These proposals were accepted by the Riksdag. The next year, in 1924, the Riksdag granted a further 7 million Kronor to the Fund. The conditions upon which loans were made remained essentially the same as in the previous year except that the interest rate was restored to the formal normal rate of 5%, the special reduction of the year before not being continued. These Government grants were eagerly absorbed and during the years 1920 to 1924 were used chiefly in the erection of small 1-and 2-family houses.

In addition to these subsidies and encouragements to building through tax exemption and cheap money, the State has granted further support through measures seeking to promote the production of dwelling houses through the field of scientific research, and has helped to finance the scientific investigation of building materials and processes looking toward the possible standardization of building materials and parts of buildings. The Government has also encouraged intelligent planning of good housing and the erection of small houses for single families on an economic basis.

Recently, there has been a gradual decrease by the State of its responsibility for aiding in housing work, marked by the repeal of the Rent Restriction Law, a decision to no longer grant State subsidies without interest or without obligation to repay the loan, and by successive reductions in grants to the State Housing Loan Fund.

This has been due to a recognition of the fact that the conditions which resulted from the War were exceptional and required exceptional treatment, and that with time these conditions have tended to right themselves. It is significant that the index number for building costs, for rents and for the cost of living in general, now approach one another closely.

Notwithstanding this withdrawal from the more direct field of State subsidy, the Government has continued annual contributions to a special loan fund intended to encourage the owning of homes by small home owners, particularly in rural districts. At the end of 1922 this Fund amounted to about 100 million Kronor.

GOVERNMENT HOUSING IN ACTION

IN AUSTRIA

A striking illustration of how Government housing functions when it has unlimited control of the situation is afforded to the civilized world at the present time in the city of Vienna. Here the Socialists' control of the Government has socialized housing and completely dominated the situation.

In that city up to the end of 1926 there existed a law which permitted the authorities to confiscate and requisition all apartments. For a long time after the War, rents have been held down to $\frac{1}{2}$ their pre-War value, and are payable in the depreciated currency which meant that landlords received practically nothing—a shilling in gold being worth 14,400 depreciated Kroner.

Under the law the landlord was forbidden to evict tenants, no matter how much rent they might owe him. Proceedings under the old law applied only to a very limited group of buildings, viz., houses which had not been rented prior to December 31st, 1925, and to new buildings—practically none of which have been built. It is true that the tenants in Vienna have to pay all taxes, repairs, insurance and other charges usually borne by the owner. These amount to considerably more than the tenants paid as rent before the War.

The owner, however, gets practically nothing, but is required to retain the management of his property and to make all repairs which the Health Department may require of him. Just what proportion of these charges must be ultimately reimbursed to him is determined by a special tribunal appointed for that purpose.

If the owner is so situated financially that he is unable to make these repairs, then his house is seized by the authorities and put up for sale. As there is no competition for the buildings thus put up at auction the local authorities in the Socialist administration of Vienna buy them in and thus become the owners of a vast number of houses from which the real owners have been dispossessed.

The Government is rapidly, therefore, becoming the sole landlord; not only has it been building in recent years new houses for 25,000 families but it is rapidly acquiring most of the existing old houses.

Under these conditions it is not strange that private construction of dwellings has entirely ceased.

The new apartments which the Government builds, it is stated, are reserved exclusively for voters of the Social Democratic Party while the general population of the city is crushed under taxes which permit the Government to house for a mere pittance the members of that party at the expense of the taxpayers generally.

If anyone wishes to see how Government housing works in practice we commend a visit to Vienna.

GERMANY'S HOUSING SHORTAGE

The German housing census taken May 16th 1927 covered all towns of more than 5,000 inhabitants, most of those between 2,000 and 5,000, and a few with population under 2,000. The number of dwellings (family units) enumerated was 10,969,029 and the number of families occupying them was 11,629,397. From which it appears that there is still a substantial shortage of housing accommodations. The official estimate of the shortage, following the taking of this census, is 776,000 new dwellings needed.

One interesting fact brought out by this census was the extent to which families were sharing their apartments with other families, especially relatives. It was found that in small towns, viz. from 5,000 to 20,000 population, families having no independent household formed 6.3% of the total families; and in large towns—those over 100,000—10.3%; in all towns combined such families formed 8.9% of the total. In this connection it was pointed out that in normal conditions about 2% of all families share their dwellings with other families for reasons other than those connected with a shortage of housing.

New building operations have been on a large scale in Germany and have been showing great activity. The net increase in dwellings in 1924 was 106,502; in 1925, 178,930; in 1926, 205,793. Practically all of this building is being done by the State or by State-aided projects. There is little or no private enterprise. Funds for this are obtained by taxing landlords of existing buildings on their rentals. This tax amounts to 48% of the actual rentals paid in many parts of Germany, except in the free city of Bremen where such tax is but 12%. The cost of building is on the average, about 70% above pre-War figures.

The Housing Census disclosed another interesting fact. In the communities covered by it it was found that there were 2,400,000 dwelling houses with 8,600,000 apartments, in addition to which there were 79,002 factory office buildings with 142,502 apartments and 27,358 bar-

racks, or housing colonies, with 49,489 apartments. Almost $\frac{1}{3}$ of the dwelling houses were single-family houses. In all Germany there were only 183 buildings of more than 50 apartments, and, of these, 96 were in Berlin.

The housing shortage was found to be more acute in Hanover, Hesse-Nassau, Northern Bavaria and Westphalia than in other parts of the Republic.

Conditions in Berlin are naturally most acute as might be imagined in a city of 4,000,000 inhabitants. Before the War thousands of apartments were empty in that city. Today, young married couples find it necessary to live with their parents; and persons moving to Berlin from other parts of the country must "buy" an apartment from its owner at no low price. The "exchange" of apartments is also a much used method, while those who can afford to pay a premium of about 500 marks a room can obtain an apartment in a new house. It is much easier, however, to rent a furnished than an empty room—the latter kind are scarcely to be had under any consideration. The rents of apartments in new houses, not built with the aid of subsidies from the different communes, are from 300 to 350% higher than the pre-War rent.

Latest dispatches from Berlin indicate that there are about 180,000 people seeking homes in that city. In order to meet the situation, the municipality has drawn up a 3-year programme which contemplates the building of 32,000 new homes each year, through a 3-year period. Funds for 24,000 of these houses will be provided by the income from the tax on house rentals of occupied buildings. The cost of the remaining 8,000 will be covered by municipal loans.

An interesting illustration of how international the housing problem is, will be found in an advertisement which occurred a few months ago in the financial columns of the New York dailies offering a bond issue of the Ruhr Housing Corporation to American investors.

The Ruhr Housing Corporation is apparently a cooperative enterprise on the part of a number of mining and industrial corporations in the Ruhr District who have joined together for the purpose of providing housing accommodations for their workers.

Dwellings with a total of 3,000 apartments are to be completed and leased to 5 of the large and important companies in the Ruhr District. These companies will, in turn, through various cooperative building associations sub-lease the apartments to individual tenants, most of whom will be in the employ of such companies.

We have not yet reached the state where New York speculative builders or employers of labor in the Pittsburgh district would think it

profitable or necessary to float a loan in Berlin, but the day may come when that situation may exist.

CHEAP DWELLINGS IN BELGIUM

A report of the activities of the Belgian National Cheap Housing Society, which is the organization through which all measures are taken in Belgium to provide houses for the poorer classes of the population, shows that there were 253 approved local Societies in active operation during 1927. These Societies, which are financed by the State, provinces, local authorities, and the public welfare committee made up of industrial employers and private individuals, carry out the actual building under the supervision of the national Society.

At the end of the year nearly 30,000 rentable buildings had been built or were in process of construction and 22,165 had been rented, while 4,741 houses had been sold, all but a few of which were sold under the state bonus system, which provides for bonuses varying according to the district and the family responsibilities of the purchaser. More than three-fourths of the proceeds of these sales had been applied at the end of the year toward the construction of new dwellings.

By the close of 1927 the total number of houses either built or being built was 33,578, of which 26,040 were one-family houses. Although the number of houses constructed was considered a remarkable achievement, the number of dwellings urgently needed in 1927 was estimated to be 100,000, and since that date this figure has increased with the growth of the population. The National Society was empowered, therefore, to raise a 6% loan of 110,000,000 francs (\$3,058,000), under Government guaranty, to cover the cost of 3,200 additional dwellings.

The first loan was so successful that proposals were made at the beginning of 1928 to float a new loan of 100,000,000 francs (\$2,780,000) and this has since been increased, by a Government proposal, to 300,000,000 francs. One-third of this amount will be used to finance a direct attack on the slum problem, so that people evicted from condemned houses will be housed in dwellings which, though plain and small, insure healthful living conditions, and measures will be taken to insure that for every house built under this scheme a condemned building will be demolished by the local authorities. One-third of the amount will be used to finance the construction of cheap dwellings of the type already built and the remainder will be deposited in a special fund to cover the cost of bonuses granted to private purchasers or builders of cheap dwellings.

Because of the great demand for houses and the fact that the national Society is necessarily restricted by its cost to the State, the Government has taken steps to encourage the construction of cheap dwellings by private initiative, and a system of bonuses has been instituted designed to make it possible for individuals to finance the construction of their homes. The right to receive a bonus is restricted to individuals whose income and property do not exceed certain stated amounts and the value of the property is also fixed for different localities. As a further incentive to the construction of cheap dwellings, an act of 1928 exempts from the property tax, for a period of ten years, all houses approved by the Cheap Housing Committees the net rent valuation of which does not exceed a fixed sum, varying according to the size of the town, provided no other bonus or credit facilities have been granted in connection with such a house. This exemption is extended to multiple-dwelling houses and to premises which include business annexes.

STEMMING THE TIDE TO THE CITIES IN ITALY

What happens when a benevolent dictator controls the Government—especially when that Dictator happens to be a very wise person—is illustrated by what is going on in Italy at the present time.

Signor Mussolini long ago recognized what city planners and housing reformers have been urging the world over for many years, that the concentration of population in vast numbers in large cities, and the consequent diminution of the population throughout the countryside, is not a good thing for civilization. And he not only set his face against this tendency but characteristically took practical steps to stop it.

A Royal decree issued recently by the Prefect of Milan under the authority of a law passed last December,* which authorizes Prefects throughout Italy to take steps to halt the migration of country workers to cities, shows how effectively this can be done when once the Government wants to stem the tide to the cities.

Article I of this decree provides that any person entering the city of Milan for the purpose of employment must report to the police within 5 days and must, within 15 days prove to the satisfaction of the police that he has found employment. If he has not found employment within that time, he will at once be sent back to the place where he formerly lived.

* See "*Housing*", December, 1928, p. 259.

Similarly, if persons coming from outside the city into the city are out of employment for a period of a month during the first 6 months of their stay in that city they must be sent back to their homes in the country.

In order to make sure that these rules are observed employers are forbidden to employ workers recently arrived in the city who do not conform to these regulations.

It is thus seen that without interfering with the natural ambition of a country person to advance himself and secure employment where employment is to be had, a very simple scheme has been developed by which thousands of people are prevented from flocking to the cities there to congest the already congested population and compete with them in industry, at the same time depopulating the countryside.

That Mussolini's "back to the land" policy is being carried out energetically and is likely to succeed is evidenced in a number of other ways. One of these is to be found in the great reclamation project which is going on in the famous Pontine Marshes, famous for centuries because of their malaria breeding qualities, which made Rome almost uninhabitable for centuries.

One of the chief advocates of the vast reclamation schemes which Italy has planned and which it is beginning to carry out is Prince di Caetani, recently Ambassador to Washington, and who personally owns thousands of acres in these Pontine Marshes, containing several mediaeval towns and castles, deserted on account of malaria, and situated on the old road between Naples and Rome.

The programme which he has developed, and which has been accepted practically in its entirety by the Government, will be a combined effort of private initiative and Government cooperation.

The land owners have formed cooperative organizations, recognized by the Government, which has agreed to provide \$2,500,000 for this work in the next 10 years. At the same time, the small savings banks are being encouraged to develop agrarian loans. These are expected to amount to \$1,500,000 on which the State will guarantee both capital and interest.

As evidence of the Government's active participation in this plan may be cited the fact that the budget for 1929 has already authorized an expenditure of \$11,775,000 for this purpose, of which \$11,500,000 will be contributed by the Ministry of Public Works, in addition to \$275,000 by the Ministries of the Interior and of Education. In all, an official Report shows, the great sum of \$420,000,000 is to be expended.

How colossal this task of reclamation is and the rather remarkable progress that has already been made, is evidenced by the fact that

a survey made 2 years ago shows that Italy had 4,768,027 acres capable of being reclaimed and put under cultivation. Of these, 1,863,660 have already been drained, 2,145,602 are in course of drainage, and 835,765 are to be drained, it is expected, in the present year.

Dovetailed with these reclamation projects are other measures for improving agrarian life and offering incentives to the inhabitants of Italy to return to the land and keep out of the big cities. Among these may be mentioned bonuses for increased grain production, decrees to prevent emigration to cities and towns which we have already described, prizes for large rural families and taxes on bachelors.

One of the interesting details of this scheme is found in the provision that where the owner of large areas of land fails to develop them and reclaim them as the Government thinks should be done, the Government calmly expropriates the land after evidence of neglect or absentee landlordism has been established. Already certain members of the Calabrian and Sicilian aristocracy have lost large holdings of land under this law.

That those responsible for this intelligent and progressive policy know what they are doing and have definite objectives clearly in mind is shown by the statement that it is expected as a result of these measures, by about the year 1940 there will be an increase in the stable agriculture value of the country from \$2,000,000,000 to \$4,000,000,000, representing an investment of from \$500,000,000 to \$750,000,000.

Along with these schemes to stem the tide to the cities and turn it back to the fields is a well organized and intelligently planned campaign for increasing the birth rate.

HOUSING IN VENICE

Venice, which "once held the gorgeous East in fee" has like other great European cities been feeling the housing shortage since the War. This housing shortage having recently become rather acute, the national government has granted a subsidy of 5,000,000 lire to the city for assistance in building a large number of popular priced houses for workingmen and for the middle classes in that city. In addition to this sum of 5,000,000 lire, 25,000,000 lire more has been raised locally by the city itself and by individuals to assist the local Institute for Popular Housing in its work of providing additional houses to meet this housing shortage.

This organization has already done splendid work in building new houses in the local quarter of Vittorio Emanuele that provide accommodations for 4,500 people. Several hundred large and small houses have

been built and the quarter has been developed commercially by small tradesmen and shopkeepers and in a very short time has become almost a city in itself.

Venice is unique in its inability to expand. Where the new houses are to be placed has been a very difficult question to decide. In all probability they will be erected on the north end of the Lido where there is sufficient room for further development, but an alternative is the new Porto Marghera section on the adjacent mainland.

VENICE FACES TRAFFIC PROBLEMS TOO

Venice of all cities in the world is probably the last city that one would associate with modern city planning problems, but, like other European cities, it is feeling the urge towards modernization and is talking about subways, elevated railroads and all of the paraphernalia that one associates with cities like New York and Paris, as being necessary to deal with her traffic problem.

There have been all kinds of plans discussed from fast motor boat service on the Canal to subways and elevated roads.

The plan which seems to find most favor at the present time involves a widened vehicular bridge alongside the present railroad bridge, connecting Venice with the mainland; a new canal cut through the heart of the city, cutting out one of the loops of the Grand Canal; and a subterranean trolley line running through the city from the Venice end of the present railroad bridge to St. Elena. This trolley car subway is to pass twice under the Grand Canal, once near the present railroad bridge and again at the Rialto.

None of these plans is likely to be accomplished without considerable opposition, for the people of Venice rightly cling to present conditions in their city and do not wish to see anything done that will spoil its charm. For, after all, notwithstanding the fact that Venice is a great center of industry, its chief industry at the present time, from a financial point of view, is undoubtedly the tourist industry, and anything that spoils the charm of Venice and detracts from its glamour will ultimately prove disadvantageous to the people of that city.

With the development of Mestre on the mainland in recent years as a growing industrial center where many thousands of Venetians go to work every day, the need for better transport between the city and Mestre has become imperative.

The Venetians are also feeling the need of quicker transportation throughout Venice. Transportation by gondola is being found too slow to meet modern industrial conditions. Then, too, there is a desire

to make Venice more approachable for motorists. In recent years they have left their cars at Mestre, the nearest spot on the mainland, and have then proceeded by fast motor boat or by gondola into Venice itself. To bring motor cars into Venice would destroy its charm and the Venetians have set their face against any such plan. Mestre will undoubtedly mark the limit to which motor cars may proceed.

One feature of the plan which is rather novel is the method that is proposed of building the trolley car subways. Owing to the fact that the houses of Venice are built on piles, it is found impossible to build a subway by the ordinary methods. So, instead of leaving the houses standing, it is proposed to demolish all of the houses on the proposed route, dig a deep trench and then construct a concrete tunnel, filling in again and rebuilding the houses. It is claimed that this method will be both quicker and less costly than would building a subway by the usual methods. Even at that, the cost is considerable, being estimated at 250,000,000 lire, or about \$13,000,000.

One of the by-products of building this subway, which has especial interest for students of housing, is that it will undoubtedly mean the demolition of many small and insanitary houses and their replacement with ones more suited to modern standards of living. Characteristically, the route of the proposed subway has been so laid out that it will not involve injury or destruction of any buildings of historical or artistic value.

With these important changes accomplished, it is hoped that the present ugly railroad station may also be replaced by one more in keeping with modern conditions and more worthy of a city of the wealth and beauty of Venice.

The new plans are said to have had Mussolini's hearty approval. Although the Government has not as yet officially acted upon them, it is expected that the Government will consider contributing from its funds a sum necessary for this scheme.

ACTIVITY IN OTHER CITIES

In addition to providing this large subsidy for aiding in meeting the housing shortage in Venice the national government has also recently granted similar subsidies to enable the building of similar types of houses in the city of Bolzano the capital of the Province of Bolzano in the Upper Adige.

About a year ago forty-eight million lire were voted for housing developments in Rome, this considerable grant by the Government being made to the Institute for Tenement Houses in Rome, which is an official

organization engaged in the construction of dwelling houses and tenements for working people, which the tenants may acquire on the installment plan.

DEMOCRACY TO THE NTH POWER

NATIONALIZATION OF HOUSING IN RUSSIA

There are many people in America who look to Russia as affording an enlightening object lesson of new methods in government and of democracy carried to the nth power. In England, among a limited group—the so-called “Left Wing” of the Labor Party—there has been in recent years a rather insistent advocacy of the nationalization of various functions now performed by private effort.

It is, therefore, instructive to learn how nationalization of housing and the building industry in Russia has actually worked out in practice.

A little over 11 years ago all building enterprises in that country were confiscated by the Government from their owners. During these 11 years a policy of nationalization has held sway that has produced nothing but chaos and inefficiency.

These statements are based not on the reports of prejudiced observers from outside of Russia who are opposed to the principle of nationalization, but are the result of reports made by the Russian people themselves and by the leading advocates of nationalization in that country.

At the Plenary Session of the Central Council of Trade Unions of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Russia) held a little over a year ago the housing policy of the Government was one of the principal subjects of discussion.

A report on the housing situation delivered at this meeting contains a remarkable confession of failure. This Report said in part:

In spite of the large sums devoted to the construction of houses since 1924—the date of resumption of building after the War and the Revolution—sums which totalled 6,000,000 chervonetz roubles (over \$30,000,000) by the end of 1927 the housing shortage in Russia is not only not decreasing, but is becoming more and more intense. The average floor space per industrial worker fell to 5.3 square metres in 1927, and there are many cases, especially in the mining, metal and textile industries, where a worker has but 4, 3, and even only 1 square metre. As for the state of dwellings it is only too often beneath all criticism, according to the repeated complaints of workers' delegates at trades union conferences, and in the correspondence column of the *Trud*, (official journal).

In February and March of the present year, (1928) inquiries were undertaken in the Donetz Mining Basin and the Petroleum Region of

Baku, and the result has been to show how unhygienic, unwholesome and harmful, both to health and to industrial productivity, are the conditions in which many workers are obliged to live. Damp, dirt, absence of sufficient ventilation, lack of sufficient beds (a single bed must suffice for several workers, who sleep in it in turns), the crowding of several families into one dwelling, and sometimes into a single room—these are the facts once again established by the investigators.

Bad effects on the physical health (tuberculosis and venereal diseases) and on the moral health (decline of working energy) of the workers frequently follow.

The housing situation has a direct bearing on the notable rise in the number of accidents of workers, it has been observed in recent years and also on the extensive labor turnover.

The report goes on to say that the absence of suitable dwellings is beginning to have a serious effect on industrial development and points out that there are more and more cases in which an enterprise is unable to take on additional workers because of inability to provide them with proper housing accommodations. Cases of this kind are cited as having occurred in the textile, petroleum and metal industries and coal mining. It is further pointed out that in numerous instances lack of houses has made it impossible to adopt the 7-hour day.

In the opinion of the government authorities and trade union circles the chief causes of the present lack of housing accommodations are: (a) Insufficient number of new buildings; (b) the deterioration of houses for want of satisfactory upkeep; (c) the employment by industry for other purposes of sums intended for the construction of houses and (d) the weakness of the Cooperative Housing Societies, on which great hopes had been set.

In addition to this striking Report, further detailed accounts of the almost incredibly bad housing conditions were given at a recent Congress of Russian Miners, the following paragraphs being taken from the Report of the Proceedings and published in the official paper, *Pravda*, of April 27th, 1928. A representative of the Ukraine Socialist Republic is quoted as follows:

Complaints on the intolerably bad housing conditions were general. As a rule floor space per person is diminishing everywhere. New dwellings require repairs after a very short time. Old buildings are not put in order, and, in consequence, they become useless. This fact only increases the acuteness of the housing crisis. For this reason, as Comrade Akoulenko says, workmen are living "like herrings in a barrel".

At the present time the 1-story barrack has become a 3-story one, because workmen sleep not only in hammocks, but under them, and in between them.

Comrade Tiutiunikova of the Ukraine said:

We are ashamed to talk of what we see. The hammocks are full of fleas, beetles are everywhere. Though we possess mattresses, we have no straw to fill them with.

Even when new dwellings are built, owing to the chaos to which nationalization has reduced the building industry, they are soon as bad as the old. Comrade Litvak in another Soviet journal, *Krasnaya Neva*, of May last thus describes the situation:

At last some new dwellings were built. To celebrate the occasion, the new houses were opened with an orchestra. The lucky people who went to live in them were to be envied. But in a week or month the inhabitants of the new houses were telling a new tale. "The walls are frozen, water-pipes are out of order, nurseries have been forgotten." In Ivan Vosnesenk a number of barracks have just been erected. They bear the proud name of "Light and Air". But such trifles as water-pipes have been omitted by the builders. Some dwellings have been built for the workmen of the coal mine, "Profintern", in the Don Area. One house was given up when still unfinished. The walls grew damp, large cracks formed, and the house soon became unfit to live in. The list of places where new buildings are numerous and bad is infinitely long.

In view of these conditions it is not strange that there should be a complete reversal of Government policy and that the Soviet Government, realizing that the principles which it has so ardently professed do not succeed when worked out in practice, should have gone back to the old capitalist system which they had so forcibly attacked. At the present time under an order issued in April 1928 the Soviet is permitting and encouraging all the features of private enterprise, normally abhorrent to the advocates of state control. In the building industry the Government now allows the establishment of joint stock companies, the opening of contractors' offices, which may undertake private contracts for the erection of houses, and the formation of private companies for the production of building materials, all of which have heretofore been prohibited by law.

In order to make the path of private enterprise even easier, the new regulations passed by the Soviet permit of the formation of private mutual credit societies for the purpose of financing building operations, at the same time granting these Societies certain exemptions with regard to taxation. Private individuals are now authorized to construct large houses for rent, and no restrictions are put upon the number of workers employed in such projects. The term of the concession permitting private individuals to construct and let premises is extended to 80 years.

Buildings erected by private persons will be exempt from all taxation during the first 3 years after construction, and will be subject to half the normal taxation rates thereafter.

The legislation fixing rents and the superficial area to be allotted each occupant will not apply to buildings constructed by private individuals and companies. They will make their own arrangements directly with their tenants. The rationing of houses is also ended. Except in War time, the public authorities are no longer permitted to impose a particular tenant on landlords or corporations building houses. Finally, foreigners, whether companies or individuals may have the advantage of all of these provisions by means of concessions granted by the authorities.

It is thus seen that the wheel has come full circle. After 11 years of actual test of the principle of nationalization of housing, Russia—finding that such nationalization has produced nothing but chaos and inefficiency—has repudiated it and returned to the much despised private enterprise and to the principles of capitalism that prevail in the rest of the civilized world.

HOUSING CONFERENCE AT FRANKFORT-ON-MAIN

An interesting exhibition of modern housing methods and process and housing standards will be a feature of the Second Congress of Modern Architecture which is to be held at Frankfort-on-Main on September 26th under the Presidency of Professor Moser of Zurich. Delegates are expected to attend this Conference from Switzerland, Poland, France, Austria, Germany, Italy, Holland, Hungary, Spain and Belgium.

One of the features of the Congress will be a discussion of the minimum requirements that should be insisted upon for wholesome housing with regard to air, light, insulation and the general plan or layout of the house from the point of view of its domestic organization.

It is proposed to set up standards by which public regulation of housing may be determined and tested. It is stated that there are already indications that existing regulations are setting their standards too low. During the Congress there will be held an exhibition of various types of houses and of housing processes. It is expected that at a later date this exhibition will be sent on tour.

MODERN MAYAN ARCHITECTURE

With the tremendous interest that has been aroused in America in recent years in the digging up of old ruined cities in Yucatan with

their disclosures of ancient Mayan civilization, it is interesting to learn of a new housing development in that country, as described by Jacob L. Crane, Jr., the Chicago town planner, who made a recent visit to Yucatan to visit the old Mayan cities.

Mr. Crane states that for the purpose of increasing housing facilities and also providing employment for those out of work, the Municipality of Merida, the capital of Yucatan, has under way a programme for the construction of several hundred small houses. These are 1 story high and consist of 2 rooms. A unique feature of each group of houses is a wind mill that supplies water for the plumbing from shallow wells. Drinking water is collected from rain water off the roofs. The houses are built of small pieces of lime stone laid up in lime mortar and plastered.

Another interesting feature of this project is that the houses are sold by municipal lottery. Every Saturday a lottery drawing is held and the winner gets the house named for that week's lottery. The amount collected on each lottery is about $\frac{1}{3}$ in excess of the actual cost of the house, and this excess is used for the support of public institutions such as hospitals and insane asylums. The buildings are constructed under the direction of the Municipal Department of Public Works.

Here is a method of stimulating house building that might apply in America where the lottery method of building houses has not as yet obtained. It seems a more intelligent method of dealing with the problem than building houses at the taxpayers' expense.

NO SKYSCRAPERS FOR RIO DE JANEIRO

It is the irony of fate that at a time when Paris has evidently yielded to an insistent demand on the part of a limited number of property owners for the erection of giant skyscrapers,* that a leading city planner of Paris should be the means of preventing the building of similar skyscrapers in the Paris of the southern hemisphere, Rio de Janeiro. This apparently is what has happened.

Alfred Agache, the distinguished French city planner, employed by the Mayor of Rio de Janeiro to make a plan for solving the traffic congestion problem of that city, and for replanning a considerable portion of its central area, has caused great agitation in that city by his opposition to certain projected skyscrapers which M. Agache felt would interfere very seriously with the proper development of the city as a great metropolis.

* See "*Housing*", June, 1929, p. 125.

According to dispatches from Rio de Janeiro received a few weeks ago M. Agache actually caused the further erection of a number of projected skyscrapers to be stopped. One envies a country where city planners are given that extraordinary power. It seems even to out-Mussolini Mussolini. Naturally a group in Rio de Janeiro has at once raised the cry that Agache is opposed to skyscrapers. Questioned about this, however, M. Agache shows, in common with all other city planners, that he is not opposed to skyscrapers *per se*, but only skyscrapers in the wrong place and built in the wrong fashion. Discussing this subject recently M. Agache said:

I am not opposed to skyscrapers. Like all edifices erected to house a group of human beings, they must first of all be well built, with all compartments conveniently arranged, and those living or working in them should receive directly the light of the sun. When I see a skyscraper constructed without interior area, without direct ventilation and without conveniences indispensable to living in it, I condemn it without question. The same opinion applies to all groups of apartment houses where people live without air or light.

If skyscrapers are erected on streets which cannot take care of them—that is, very narrow streets—and are so numerous that the result is a group of compact buildings which interfere with a city's ventilation; or if they are erected in open residence sections, so that the sections are forever sacrificed, I tell you it is foolishness.

I am no enemy of skyscrapers if, as I said, they are well built and judiciously situated in sections where they belong. The best proof of what I say is that in the newly reclaimed area at the heart of the city of Rio I have reserved space for some of these skyscrapers. They are to be placed so as to give a decorative aspect; but in all this I have provided for wide streets and large interior areas. These buildings are to be 180 to 275 feet high, which is higher than any of the buildings now in the city; and I want to point out that they will have less effect on air circulation in the city than the buildings in Cinema Row. (A solid phalanx of buildings 10 to 15 stories high.—Editor.)

M. Agache's recommendations for replanning the central part of Rio are apparently meeting with much greater support. His proposals for the construction of new wide avenues from the centre of the city to its suburbs, in a manner so as to call for the least possible destruction of existing houses and buildings, has general approval. These plans envisage a programme for the next 50 years and include the construction of a subway in the business center that is to rise above ground further out and run to the boundaries of the Federal District.

A unique and spectacular feature of the programme involves the removing of two "mountains" in the heart of the city and the dumping of them into the bay. One of these, the Morro do Castillo, is almost entirely removed at the present time. The Morro do Antonio comes next. The land made by dumping these mountains into the harbor will,

according to present plans, more than double the business area of the city.

If M. Agache's plans are carried out in their entirety it would seem as if Rio would bid fair to justify the title which civic leaders have recently given to it, of the "World's Winter Capital".

IN THE ARGENTINE

The municipality of Buenos Aires has approved the plan for a development of workmen's houses in that city to contain 2160 apartments of which 1,008 are of 2-rooms, 144 3-room and 1,008 4-room, all provided with kitchen and bath. These are to be located in 18 buildings containing 120 apartments in each building, with a main central building where there will be found neighborhood stores as well as a lecture hall, theatre, library and administration offices. Space is to be left in the development for the building of future school buildings.

The development, constructed around a central park, will cover about 100,000 square metres. It is suggested that the development be located in the *Nueva Pompeya* section of the city.

An interesting feature of this plan is the partnership arrangement that is proposed between the City and persons interested in improved housing conditions. The proposal is that the municipality should provide the land, that the financing should be done by a municipal bond issue to be taken up by the Cooperative Associations in which the home purchasers would be members and guaranteed by their monthly payments on the property, that is, along the lines of a building and loan association.

HOUSING PROGRESS IN CHILE

Up to October 31, 1927 the Superior Social Welfare Council of Chile had made loans for the erection of 5580 new houses containing about 19,000 rooms at the cost of 116,758,139 pesos,* and for repairing 776 houses containing 1,695 rooms. It also required 8,690 rooms to be reconditioned and 1096 to be demolished. On June 30th, 1928, there were 2,003 houses under construction in Chile with Government aid. Of these 1494 houses containing 5,251 rooms were in Santiago, 164 houses containing 635 rooms in Valparaiso, 24 houses with 65 rooms in Vina del Mar, 238 houses with 830 rooms in San Bernardo and 83 houses with 258 rooms in Concepción.

Under the terms of the law known as Law No. 308 which offers facilities for the erection of low priced dwellings, on June 30th, 1928

* *Peso*—12.17 cents.

loans had been made to individuals, by the Mortgage Bank, a government institution, in the sum of 11,300,000 *pesos* on finished houses and in the sum of 21,500,000 *pesos* to Cooperative Societies. Similar loans in the sum of 6,200,000 *pesos* had been granted to individuals for houses under construction at that time, and the large sum of 37,100,000 *pesos* to Cooperative Societies for houses similarly under construction.

Recently, the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare has been authorized to ask the Mortgage Bank for a loan of 6,500,000 *pesos* to carry into effect an extensive building programme in Valparaiso where it is proposed to erect 470 workers' dwellings.

That the housing needs of the whole country have not as yet been met is evidenced by reports that come from a small Chilean seaport, Iquique, the Capital of the Province of Tarapaca. It is reported that housing conditions here are deplorable, that 17,750 persons are living in 3,793 houses, having 7,017 rooms, an average of more than 2.5 persons per room. Moreover, of the 3,793 houses, 2,904 were declared insanitary and 651 as actually uninhabitable, and yet the workers living in these places are paying rents varying from 20 to 120 Chilean *pesos* a month for them. Of these houses only 1352 have water supply and only 1430 have sewer connections. Of these 1224 have no water. The value of sewer connections without water supply is difficult to understand.

Of the 149 tenement houses in Iquique, 97 were declared insanitary and 45 as actually uninhabitable, notwithstanding the fact that 3,921 persons are living in these houses. The Government is strongly urged to build sanitary and modern houses for the working people to replace these insanitary, antiquated and uninhabitable houses.

IN COLOMBIA

The Agricultural Mortgage Bank of Bogota, recently taken over by the Government, under authority of the law of 1927, will encourage the construction and rebuilding of inexpensive houses for workmen in the Departmental capitals, as well as in cities whose population exceed 20,000. These houses will be sold on the deferred payment plan and will be exempt from national, departmental and municipal taxes for 10 years.

More recently the Government has begun the construction of a number of cheap houses for workers in accordance with the provision of a new law.

IN ECUADOR

Following the plan carried out on several occasions by the Quito municipal Council of permitting fathers of large families, "distinguished for their honesty, devotion to work and good behavior" to draw lots for a house, the Government of Ecuador has allotted 5,000 and 3,000 *sucres* respectively to Guayaquil and Cuenca for the purchase of a house, awarded by lot as part of the celebration of the recent patriotic holidays in those cities.

IN GUATEMALA

Two Executive Decrees issued in 1928 grant to workers in Guatemala City free building lots in 3 different sections of the city. These lots will be distributed by a special Commission to be named by the Government, the only condition being that the lots thus distributed may not be sold, given away or subjected to any lien for 10 years. In making this arrangement it is carrying out the purpose of President Chacón in his desire to improve the social and economic condition of the workingman by enabling him to acquire his own home.

TOWN PLANNING IN PANAMA

Under a law passed last November by the National Assembly plans are to be drawn for the National and Departmental Capitals and for other cities in Panama whose growth warrants it, providing for the future development of the city with special reference to transportation facilities and the extension of the town in accordance with modern standards of sanitation and modern convenience. After such plans have once been adopted public improvements not in accordance with them may not be undertaken.

IN PARAGUAY

In Paraguay under the provisions of a law providing for pensions for railway workers, with their compulsory retirement after 25 years of service, provision is made for loans to such persons to be used for the purchase or erection of houses. The sum of 4,567,000 *pesos* has already been loaned for this purpose. Loans are made for periods of from 15 to 20 years at 8% annual interest.

A special pamphlet on the construction of houses for laborers and farmers has recently been published and is being distributed by the Bureau of Lands and Colonies. So great is the interest manifested in the subject that not only have many copies been sent out in response

to individual requests, but a number have also been distributed for use in the various rural schools.

IN VENEZUELA

A large subdivision in the city of Caracas known as San Augustin del Sur has recently been built up with houses for laborers by a firm under contract with the recently established Labor Bank. These houses of which nearly 100 are expected to be completed within the next few months, will be sold to laborers at reasonable sums on long term payments and at a low rate of interest. The houses are of 2 types, those having 3 rooms and those having 4 rooms, but all of them have modern conveniences and ample yards.

In the city of Barquisimeto, during the month of November last, 20 4-room houses of modern construction have been similarly built for laborers in a convenient section of the city, the enterprise being financed by the Labor Bank.

RENT CONTROL IN ANCIENT TIMES

There is indeed nothing new under the sun. Recent excavations at Ostia, Rome's ancient seaport at the mouth of the Tiber, have brought to light several fragments of what was an ancient newspaper, recording the news of the day at that time.

These news "sheets" are in the form of marble tablets on which was graven the news of the day, instead of being printed on paper as at the present time. These journals or gazettes contained 3 kinds of news; first, news regarding the State, such as speeches by magistrates, imperial decrees, accounts, sittings of the Senate, and so on; second, news relating to the imperial family; and third what might be termed local news.

Ten fragments of such an official gazette were found in the excavations at Ostia recently. They cover a period of about one century at the end of the Republican and the beginning of Imperial times. Such events are recorded as the abandonment of Rome by Pompey, the reform of the calendar, the death of Julius Caesar, the triumph of Drusus over the Illyrians and other historical matters of moment.

What has an interest for us in these recently recovered monuments of antiquity is the fact that they also record the rent law enacted in the reign of Pompey which secured poor tenants in the enjoyment of their houses for the period of a year without payment of rent. It is enlightening, though not surprising, to find that what seemed to

us features peculiar to this modern and mechanistic age had their counterpart in this earlier civilization over 20 centuries ago.

There is, indeed, nothing new under the sun.

SOME RELIEF FOR VIENNA LANDLORDS

At last the landlords of Vienna, who have been oppressed under the yoke of a socialist administration since the war, are to be afforded a slight modicum of relief from laws limiting the rents that they may charge for their buildings and which have practically deprived them of control of their property.

A few months ago a bill providing for revision of the War-time rent laws was passed in the Austrian Parliament after a short debate. Apparently, the issue had become so critical a one, that the then Chancellor, Monsignor Seipel, was forced to resign his office, in order to carry out an agreement that would harmonize the different interests.

Under the new law, house-owners will be allowed to increase rents to 20% of the pre-War figure until the year 1931, and also may regain possession of their houses, if they need them for their own occupation.

This "concession" does not satisfy the extremists but it will be a boon to the landlords who have been receiving sums in the neighborhood of \$5, as a result of being obliged to continue to calculate rents in pre-War currency, despite its terrific depreciation.

The socialists who have been in control of Parliament and of the municipal government in Vienna have argued that to charge normal rents would cause the economic collapse of Austria, and have maintained rent "socialization" by means of Parliamentary obstruction; in the absence of a closure rule on debate until recently they have been able to prevent any change.

This situation has apparently now come to an end, and it would seem as if Austria, and more particularly Vienna, was about to return to more normal conditions.

SWEDEN GETS RID OF RENT RESTRICTION

Sweden, though a neutral in the War, felt the effect of it in common with other European countries. During the first 2 years of the War the housing market was not affected much by the changed conditions but at the beginning of 1917 a sudden change took place and it became necessary to prevent a too rapid increase in rents.

Accordingly, in 1917, a Rent Restriction Act was passed by the Riksdag (Parliament) by which special Local Rent Committees were given power to fix rents at various amounts in their discretion. In addition, landlords were prevented from giving the usual notice to quit

the premises and all such notices were declared to be invalid unless the local Rent Committee approved them.

This law was made mandatory in towns and urban districts containing 5,000 inhabitants and could be applied to smaller places by Royal sanction. The law was enacted frankly as an emergency or temporary measure and by its terms was to be in force and effect only for a short period. But, like Rent control laws in other countries, its termination has been postponed from year to year, until it finally was repealed in 1923.

One interesting change was made in 1918, a year after its enactment by which the power of local Rent Committees to fix rents was withdrawn, and a mandatory rent increase of 15% permitted over the rental figures that prevailed in the years 1914-1915. By successive steps this permitted rent increase has been raised from 15% up to 50%.

In 1921 it was provided that the Rent Restriction Laws should come to an end in 1923 unless a further prolongation should be especially decided on.

A Royal proposal in 1922 to prolong the law was rejected by the Riksdag, consequently the Act ceased to be in force on October 1st, 1923.

In order that hardship might not result and that the readjustment might be gradual, the Riksdag passed a special law intended to regulate certain legal consequences of the Rent Restriction Act and facilitating a transition to the ordinary arrangements. This law contained a number of provisions protecting tenants during the transition period, without however continuing Rent Restriction.

RENT CONTROL IN FINLAND

The housing shortage in Finland, which was acute from 1915 to 1921, abated in 1923 and at the present time no traces of it are said to exist. Between 1917 and 1923 many laws restricting rents were enacted. Up to 1919 rents could not be raised; after that date increases up to 50% were permitted. All construction is on private initiative supplemented by loans from cities and towns, which in turn were aided by the State.

While rent restrictions existed up to the year 1923 the housing shortage remained acute, but when the rent laws were repealed the shortage diminished. Private construction has grown to a point where it may be truly said that the demand has been fully met. The new buildings have all modern improvements and are better constructed than those before the war, though the cost of construction is the same as in 1914. Rents remain at the same figure since the rent restriction

laws have been repealed. The value of money has not changed. The average monthly rent is calculated on the basis of 25 marks per square yard, heating included, or 16 francs per month or 192 francs per year.

RENT CONTROL CONTINUING IN FRANCE

Recent dispatches from Paris indicate that the latest of the many Rent Control acts in that country will soon become a law and that certain classes of tenants will be allowed to remain where they are for 10 years longer. This applies to those whose rents in 1914 were less than 500 francs per year, the franc at that time being 5 times its present value, or \$100 a year, taxes not being included. Such tenants, under the new proposal, will pay 1½ times the old rent until the year 1931. After that, they will be required to pay an additional 15% every year. Although under the last law passed dealing with this subject, French landlords were promised gradual tapering off or decontrol of rents, apparently the Powers that Be have found that in France, as well as in New York City, there is a "political emergency".

SOUTH AMERICA RETURNING TO NORMALCY

The countries of South America which though remote from the War suffered the effects of it in numerous ways, are also seeking to get rid of their rent control laws and to return to more normal conditions. In Brazil last December the President signed a decree repealing the rent laws which provided for a limitation of rentals on dwellings in Rio de Janeiro during a period of housing shortage. Now that Rio is being enlarged by the addition of new sections the necessity for rent control has disappeared, as the balance between supply and demand has been restored.

In Peru on the contrary a new Rent Control law went into effect last January. By the terms of this statute it is to last only for a 2-year period, and while it benefits poor tenants by maintaining fixed low rents, it permits proprietors of dwellings to raise the rents not more than 10% annually on houses renting for over 10 Peruvian pounds per month. The proprietor is also permitted to secure control of his property once more where needed for his own or his family's occupancy.

THE FARCE OF RENT CONTROL IN NEW YORK CITY

In 1920, the New York legislature to meet an emergency enacted laws controlling rents, forbidding the summary eviction of tenants while the emergency remained. While these laws were a very radical departure from anything heretofore known in the United States and seemed to many to violate the principle of the sanctity of private con-

tract which the courts of the country have always heretofore sustained, it was recognized that the situation existing at the time needed to be dealt with, and that for it there was, apparently, no other remedy.

When these laws were challenged, the issue was taken to the highest court and the control of rents as an emergency power—but only as an emergency power—was sustained by the United States Supreme Court.

From that time until the present day, the Rent Laws have staid on the statute books in New York state, although the city of Washington got rid of them years ago, and the few other cities that had enacted similar laws long ago swept them away.

In New York, these laws have gradually come to have application solely in New York City. They have been kept alive year by year by the legislature in response to what have seemed rather demagogic demands for their continuance.

This year the legislature finally got up sufficient courage to refuse to extend the laws any further, in view of the fact that there was no longer any shadow of justification for their continuance. The official body charged with responsibility for ascertaining the facts, the State Board of Housing, reported that not only was there no longer an emergency that justified the enactment of rent control legislation, but that there was a large number of vacant apartments in New York City, indicating quite clearly that there was no longer need of such legislation.

They further pointed out that the increased building construction in the city in the year was sufficient to house an additional population of nearly 2,000,000 people, although the population growth of the city in the period amounted to not over 400,000. In view of official figures showing 102,158 vacant apartments in the city, it is not surprising that the legislature reached the conclusion that any further extension of the rent laws was unjustified, and that this interference with normal freedom of contract should cease.

Everybody supposed, therefore, that the rent control laws when they expired on July 1st would really come to an end.

What they failed to realize was, that while there was no longer a housing emergency, there was a political emergency. A municipal election and a political campaign impended!

In view of this situation it is not surprising that a measure extending the rent control legislation for another year, until May, 1930, should have been introduced in the Board of Aldermen and sponsored by the City Administration. Upon the introduction of this measure being made public, there at once arose much public discussion and very strenuous opposition on the part of large real estate interests, when it was disclosed that the proposed rent measures would apply not only to

low-rent tenement houses but to the highest class apartment houses renting for many thousands of dollars a year.

Numerous hearings were had before the Board of Estimate and Apportionment and as a result of the opposition of this group of real estate interests, the proposed Rent Control Law was very radically modified and limited to flats not renting for more than \$15 a month a room. In this form the bill was finally passed and received Mayor Walker's signature. It extends the operation of the Rent Laws in that class of buildings to May 1, 1930.

There is every probability that this attempt on the part of the local legislative body to usurp the functions of the state legislature will be tested in the courts.

It will make little difference, we imagine, to the sponsors of this legislation if this is done. They will have achieved their political gesture, and will have secured those political advantages from the introduction of this measure that the measure, evidently, was intended to secure.

If the courts later hold the legislation invalid, we feel sure that the Administration will not shed bitter tears.

We had hoped that the agitation for the continuance of the rent laws which marked the recent session of the New York legislature this Winter was the last dying gasp of rent control in America. Apparently, however, there still has to be a little reflex action—what may be described as those final twitches of the frogs' legs under galvanic action!

We hope the new rent law will get into the courts and that it will have definitive construction by the highest court, the Court of Appeals, for the time has more than come when the courts should hand down a decision that will put an end to the farce of rent control legislation in New York City.

THE RENT SITUATION THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY

The recent semi-annual survey of the real estate situation throughout the country made by the National Association of Real Estate Boards through its constituent member bodies covering 379 cities, as of June 1st last, shows that rents of single-family dwellings are higher than they were a year ago in 17% of these cities, that such rents remain unchanged in 56% of these cities, and are lower than they were a year ago in 27% of the cities covered by the survey.

Rents of 2-family dwellings are reported higher than a year ago in 12% of these cities, they are on the same basis in 58% and lower in 30% of them. Apartment rentals were reported higher than a year ago in 18% of the cities, the same as a year ago in 65%, and lower in

17% of the cities. As correlative information on this question of rents, the facts with regard to shortage of dwellings and over-supply as the case may be, are not without interest.

The survey showed that in 62% of the 379 cities covered by the inquiry there was a normal supply of single-family dwellings; 21% of the cities reported a shortage in this class of buildings and 17% reported an over-supply. A normal supply of apartment houses was reported by 56% of the cities; 27% reported a shortage in apartments and 17% an over-supply.

Viewing the subject with regard to the kind of residential building affected, it appears that rents of single-family and 2-family dwellings show a slight decline over a year before, whereas apartment rents have on the whole been stationary during the year. In single-family dwellings 17% of the cities covered reported higher rentals while 27% reported lower rentals. In 2-family dwellings, 12% of the cities reported higher rentals and 30% lower; and in apartment houses 18% reported higher rentals and 17% lower.

Of cities having populations of 500,000 and over 42% reported apartment rents stationary and 29% reported them lower than a year ago.

The following table shows the change in rentals in various classes of dwellings in these cities in the different geographical sections of the country as well as in cities of different sizes:

PERCENTAGE OF CITIES REPORTING UPWARD, STATIONARY OR DOWNWARD MOVEMENTS OF RESIDENTIAL RENTS AS COMPARED WITH MAY, 1928.

Section and Size of City	SINGLE FAMILY DWELLINGS			TWO FAMILY DWELLINGS			APARTMENTS		
	Up	Stat.	Down	Up	Stat.	Down	Up	Stat.	Down
Total for United States and Canada	17	56	27	12	58	30	18	65	17
New England.....	25	35	40	10	52	38	11	68	21
Middle Atlantic.....	8	49	43	2	53	45	10	63	27
East North Central.....	15	60	25	11	61	28	21	58	21
West North Central.....	38	45	17	17	62	21	21	69	10
South Atlantic.....	8	57	35	6	56	38	17	66	17
East South Central.....	23	46	31	22	46	32	31	46	23
West South Central.....	19	59	22	15	59	26	12	76	12
Mountain.....	28	61	11	19	69	12	28	72	.....
Pacific.....	18	62	20	15	65	20	22	69	9
Canada.....	60	40	.....	60	40	.....	20	80	.....
Over 500,000.....	15	70	15	7	62	31	29	42	29
200,000 to 500,000.....	10	55	35	.....	55	45	.....	60	40
100,000 to 200,000.....	18	58	24	8	54	38	11	78	11
25,000 to 100,000.....	15	54	31	11	54	35	16	65	19
Under 25,000.....	20	51	29	17	57	26	25	62	13
District Boards.....	17	67	16	9	77	14	16	68	17

A NATION OF CLIFF DWELLERS

Is the United States rapidly becoming a nation of cliff dwellers? The latest official statistics gathered by the U. S. Department of Labor would seem to indicate that it is.

Since 1921 that Department has kept figures on the trend of building construction and housing in 257 cities. The figures for 1928 have recently been published. They show a steady trend toward apartments and other forms of multiple dwellings and away from the private home, a rising cost of housing per family and for the past 3 years a steady decline in the volume of building construction. The housing shortage following the War period has been more than overcome.

That the trend toward congregate living is not something of the moment but is a steadily developing one is evidenced by the figures for these 257 identical cities for which this information has been compiled since 1921.

In 1921 24.4% of all the new residential construction provided for the housing of families in multi-family dwellings. The next year this percentage had risen to 31.2, the next year to 33; in 1924 it fell back to 30.9, in 1925 it rose to 36.4, in 1926 it jumped to 45.4; in 1927 to 48.3 and in 1928, the year under consideration, it rose to 53.7. In other words, in the short period of 7 years, the percentage of families living in multi-family dwellings—so far as one can gauge the situation by the consideration of the new accommodations provided—more than doubled.

With this increasing tendency toward multi-family dwellings there has been, of course, a corresponding decline in the percentage of the population housed in single-family dwellings. In 1927, 58.3% of all the new residential buildings constructed provided for the housing of the families in single-family dwellings. In 1928 this had dropped to 35.2%. In other words, whereas 7 years ago $\frac{1}{2}$ of the families housed were housed in single-family dwellings, today but $\frac{1}{3}$ are so housed. Since 1924 there has been a similar steady decline in the percentage of families housed in 2-family dwellings. In that year 21.5% of the families housed in new residential buildings were housed in buildings of that kind, whereas last year but 11.1% of all the families were so housed.

This study of the Department of Labor brings out many interesting and significant facts. New York easily leads the country in its being an apartment house city. In the Borough of Manhattan—what is New York to most of the country—in 1928, there were practically no single-family dwellings constructed; 99.9% of all the families housed in new residential construction in that year were housed in multi-family

dwellings. The Borough of the Bronx, which many people have regarded as a more rural and less developed section of the city than Manhattan, is a close second. Here in that year 92.8% of all the families provided for were housed in multi-family dwellings, 3.8% in single-family dwellings and 3.4% in 2-family dwellings.

The Borough of Queens which for so long has been a city of private residences has also gotten the apartment house trend. In 1928 60.8% of the living accommodations provided in Queens were in multi-family dwellings, and in Brooklyn 78.4%.

New York is not the only city by any means which shows these remarkable tendencies. Even the city of Washington, the nation's Capital, once considered provincial and termed the "city of magnificent distances", because it was scattered over a vast territory is rapidly becoming an apartment house city, though its general aspect is still, we are glad to say, a city of private residences.

However, judging the tendencies from the figures of new construction, it appears that of all the residential accommodations provided in the city of Washington in new buildings in 1928, 68.9% of the families thus housed were housed in multi-family dwellings, as compared with 24.6% 7 years ago.

This trend is similar all over the country. In all the large cities it is the same. Single-family dwellings are being constructed apparently only in the suburbs, in villages and in remote country districts. Even in the suburbs, the trend toward apartment houses is very striking.

In the smaller cities the individual houses are still in the majority but they are steadily losing ground. Baltimore built more 1-family units than any other city, but even so, it lost in the percentage of individual houses as compared with apartment house dwellings.

The returns gathered by the Department of Labor include as usual figures showing the cost of new construction. These figures, however, are very unreliable, due to no fault of the Department of Labor, but to the fact that in making estimates of the cost of new buildings it is not the custom of builders to state this very accurately. However, this is the only material that is available from which any conclusions can be reached. Making allowance for these elements it appears that the cost of 1-family dwellings advanced nearly \$1,000 a dwelling in the 7-year period under review. In 1928 it averaged \$4,937. The cost of 2-family dwellings increased in almost equal ratio averaging \$4,480. per family in 1928, while the average cost per family provided for in apartment houses was \$3,880 per family.

Considering the largest cities in the country, viz. the 14 cities having a population of 500,000 or over, the survey shows that 67.2% of the families provided for in new construction in 1928 in these 14 cities were housed in multi-family dwellings. These 14 cities provided new dwelling places for 232,681 families in 1928.

From all of which it would seem that the private dwelling is rapidly tending to disappear. Whether the American home is disappearing with it, is a question about which there is much debate.

HOW THE BUILDING DOLLAR GOES

Housing reformers in the United States are most keen to reduce the cost of building, and this is not strange, for at present the cost of a new home is beyond the purchasing power of the average American unskilled workingman.

Anything therefore that will throw light on the possibilities of reducing costs is most welcome. While the chief emphasis in some quarters is placed upon reducing the cost of financing, the large element in the cost of building is, as practically every person knows, the cost of building materials and building labor.

How these costs can be reduced is the question. It is helpful to an understanding of the situation in considering the possibilities in this field, to have before one the facts with regard to the proportion of the cost of building a home and the different elements that enter into it.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U. S. Department of Labor at Washington has performed a real service to the cause of housing in presenting a study of the relative costs of material and labor and of each class of work or element that enters into a building for 3 cities, widely different in size and in geographical distribution, selected as fairly representative of different types of urban communities, the data having been collected as of the early part of 1928. The 3 cities selected were Washington, D. C., Cincinnati, Ohio and Decatur, Illinois, having populations respectively of 552,000, 413,700 and 57,100.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics is at pains to point out that the figures presented are for these three cities only, and should not be interpreted as applying to the United States as a whole. Speaking in engineering terms, they may be said to be "test borings", and are reasonably fair samples of the situation throughout the country.

A word, perhaps, is in order, with regard to the basis on which the figures were arrived at. Representative contractors in these three

cities furnished to agents of the Bureau data as to the amounts actually spent for materials and labor for each of the different parts of the building on which they did the work themselves, and also as to the amounts of the sub-contracts and the sub-contractors to whom let. Sub-contractors in turn reported the amount spent for labor and materials on that part of the building on which they worked.

The cost figures given are the net cost figures representing only the actual cost of the building from the time excavations started. They do not include overhead expenses, profits, cost of land or charges of financing.

Similarly, the cost of the material, is its actual cost as delivered to the job, including freight and hauling. The labor costs are costs of labor on the job and do not include any shop labor, such as the making up of mill work or the cutting of stone at quarries. The buildings selected for the study were chosen from the types usually built in the city and the number selected from each type was roughly in proportion to the total number built in that city. With this word of warning, it is interesting to proceed to the facts disclosed by the study. We are confining our comments entirely to residential buildings as being the class of buildings having interest for our readers.

In the three cities taken as a whole the cost of materials was 54% of the total cost in residential buildings, while labor was responsible for 46% of the cost.

The proportion of costs did not differ greatly in the different cities. In Cincinnati the lowest materials cost on any one residential building was 48.4% and the highest 56.9%, while the lowest labor cost was 43.1% and the highest 51.6%. In Decatur the range of materials cost for buildings was from 60.7% to 66.1% and of labor from 33.9% to 39.3%.

In Washington the cost of materials formed 49.7% of the total cost of residential buildings where the materials cost was lowest, and 56% of the cost where the materials cost was highest. What each important class of work in a residential building cost, relative to the entire cost of the building, is shown in the following table:

It is apparent from this table that carpenter work was the largest element in the cost of residential buildings in the three cities for which data was obtained. This is not strange in view of the fact that the type of building that is being built today in the United States is still the frame building.

Class of work	Per cent of total cost chargeable to specified class of work in—			
	Cincinnati, Ohio	Decatur, Ill.	Washington, D. C.	Total
Excavating and grading.....	2.3	2.0	1.9	2.0
Brick work.....	12.7	11.8	18.4	16.1
Carpenter work.....	31.4	45.0	33.0	32.7
Tile work.....	2.8	1.0	1.6	2.1
Concrete work.....	11.3	7.1	8.4	9.5
Electric wiring and fixtures.....	3.6	2.5	2.3	2.8
Heating.....	5.6	6.4	5.3	5.5
Plumbing.....	11.0	7.8	8.3	9.3
Plastering and lathing.....	9.0	5.9	8.4	8.6
Painting.....	2.8	5.5	5.4	4.4
Papering.....	.8	.7	1.0	.9
Roofing.....	1.6	4.2	2.5	2.2
Miscellaneous.....	5.1	.1	3.5	4.0
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Brick work took the next largest slice of the building dollar, 16.1% going for materials and labor on this class of work in the three cities as a whole.

The relative proportion of cost of labor and cost of materials in each class of work in the 3 different cities is shown in the following table:

Class of Work	CINCINNATI		DECATUR		WASHINGTON		TOTAL	
	Ma- terial	La- bor	Ma- terial	La- bor	Ma- terial	La- bor	Ma- terial	La- bor
Excavating and grading.....	Per 10.0	cent 90.0	Per 100.0	cent 100.0	Per 100.0	cent 100.0	Per 4.3	cent 95.7
Brick work.....	54.6	45.4	45.9	54.1	52.8	47.2	53.2	46.8
Carpenter work (builders' hardware, lumber, and mill-work).....	58.6	41.4	69.3	30.7	54.5	45.5	56.5	43.5
Tile work.....	52.8	47.2	61.8	38.2	57.7	42.3	55.2	44.8
Concrete work.....	43.4	56.6	65.6	34.4	58.8	41.2	51.9	48.1
Electric wiring and fixtures.....	61.7	38.3	72.0	28.0	68.9	31.1	65.5	34.5
Plumbing.....	68.9	31.1	77.9	22.1	60.8	39.2	64.8	35.2
Heating.....	71.0	29.0	78.5	21.5	72.8	27.2	72.2	27.8
Painting.....	40.3	59.7	49.4	50.6	25.3	74.7	33.4	66.6
Papering.....	22.3	77.7	31.5	68.5	33.2	66.8	26.6	73.4
Plastering.....	45.8	54.2	45.0	55.0	37.8	62.2	38.3	61.7
Roofing.....	48.4	51.6	67.8	32.2	56.4	43.6	54.8	45.2
Miscellaneous.....	87.2	12.8	95.8	4.2	63.0	37.0	74.8	25.2

It is quite evident from this study that any effort to reduce the cost of building must necessarily address itself to the task of reducing the cost of labor and materials—so far as that may be feasible.

ARE APARTMENTS CHEAPER THAN PRIVATE DWELLINGS?

One of the reasons often advanced for the trend toward apartment house methods of living in the United States—which has been increasing tremendously in recent years—is the statement that it is cheaper to build apartment houses than it is private dwellings, and that the cost per family is considerably less in the multi-family dwelling than it is in the private dwelling.

Figures gathered by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics for the first half of 1928, collected from 89 cities with a population of 100,000 and over, present some interesting facts with regard to the relative cost of dwelling accommodations per family in different kinds of dwellings. These have been given in comparative form for each class of dwelling, viz. 1-family dwellings, 2-family dwellings, multi-family dwellings, and all classes of dwellings.

In 14 cities having a population of 500,000 and over, building permits were issued for 30,323 1-family dwellings, the average cost of which, as stated in the permit,* was \$5,169. The average cost per family for 2-family dwellings in these 14 cities was \$4,356, the price ranging from a stated price of \$2,279 in Buffalo to \$5,974 in Chicago. Only 14,312 families were housed in this class of dwelling in these 14 cities.

Permits were issued during the period under review in these 14 cities for multi-family dwellings to house 93,368 families over 3 times as many families as provided for in 1-family dwellings. The average cost per family of the multi-family dwelling was \$4,214. The greatest cost per family was naturally found in the Borough of Manhattan where it cost \$7,014 per family to house the 8,531 families domiciled in its apartment houses. The explanation of this fact is to be found not in the higher cost of building in the Borough of Manhattan, but in the fact that with slight exceptions, only expensive high grade apartment houses are today being built in that Borough. The average cost per family ranged from \$2,063 in St. Louis to \$5,597 in Washington.

Considering each city as a whole, the figures show that Washington paid more per family unit than any of the other cities, the cost being \$6,610 per family to care for the 2,126 families provided for in Washington during the period under review.

Similar facts were collected with regard to 22 cities having a population of between 200,000 and 500,000. In contrast with the larger cities it will be seen that these 22 cities provided for more families in 1-family dwellings than in apartment houses, 47.8% of the total number of

** The statements thus made are notoriously inaccurate but they are the only information that is available.—Editor.*

families provided for being thus housed, as contrasted with 22% in the 14 larger cities recently discussed.

The average cost of 1-family dwellings in these cities was \$4,601. Costs ranged from \$2,671 per family in Dallas, Texas, to \$9,841 in Newark, New Jersey.

The average cost of 2-family dwellings was \$3,533 per family, ranging from \$2,037 in New Orleans to \$10,000 in Omaha. It cost an average in these 22 cities of \$3,457 per family to house families in multi-family dwellings, the range running from a cost of \$1,134 per family in San Antonio, Texas to \$8,301 in Louisville.

Similar facts were presented with regard to the next smaller group of cities, viz., the 49 cities having a population of between 100,000 and 200,000. In this group one-family dwellings had an average cost of \$4,502, 2-family dwellings an average cost of \$3,805 per family, while the families living in multi-family dwellings were housed at an average cost of \$3,801 per family.

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

THE SUPPLY OF BUILDINGS

How important accurate knowledge of conditions in each community is from the point of view of the real estate interests is emphasized in a statement made by the National Association of Real Estate Boards some months ago.

Taking a recent inventory made by the Oak Park, Illinois, Real Estate Board as the basis of its text, the National Association takes occasion to point out to real estate boards throughout the country the importance of every city systematically taking an inventory of its real estate supply at definite fixed intervals—both as to vacant and occupied property. They very wisely say that where this has been done in more than one case the city has averted threatened “boom” conditions, dispelled popular exaggerated notions of over-building, stabilized real estate values and made a more ready and stable market for real estate as a commodity.

Using the Oak Park Survey as a model of how to obtain an accurate picture of existing supply in all types of structure and property, the National Association points out that in that particular community vacancies in flats and duplexes were much lower than in apartment houses; that 6-room and 7-room apartments were in greater scarcity at the time than the ordinarily more popular 1-room to 5-room apartments.

An interesting fact for those interested in zoning is the disclosure that 59.8% of the territory zoned for apartments was still unimproved with apartments, and that 57.3% of the territory zoned for business was as yet unimproved with business structures, although the land in some cases is occupied by other types of structures.

The National Association says very properly that it is obviously desirable to encourage building the kinds of improvements of which there is a shortage and to retard building along lines of which the supply is either approaching or is already in advance of the city's requirements, and points out that the only accurate method of determining this is through a tabulation of the total supply of each class of property on hand and the percentage of vacancies in each class.

The advantages and the results of such periodic and accurate inventories of the real estate supply of a city are thus summed up by the National Association

1. It should stabilize building operations, by tending to check the erection of those types of buildings of which the supply is adequate for the time being, and by tending to stimulate building activity among those classes of improvements in which the survey shows an existing shortage.
2. It should stabilize rentals and values, by stabilizing the building situation and by dispelling unfounded popular impressions and rumors as to the condition of the real estate market.
3. It should make real estate a more liquid commodity, by stabilizing rents and values and taking out, therefore, the uncertainty in the mind of the buyer or seller as to future major market fluctuations.
4. It should facilitate intelligent subdivision and city planning, by giving builders, subdividers, and city planning authorities information showing the quantity, location and percentage of vacancies in existing real estate improvements, thus enabling them to forecast more intelligently the expansion of various districts of the city and the direction of growth of the city as a whole.

They advocate taking surveys twice a year and suggest that the latter part of January and the latter part of July are the most desirable dates for the taking of such a survey. As a basis of classification of the kinds of various buildings, they suggest the following 9 groups:

a. Single-family dwellings, b. Flats and Duplexes, c. Apartments (Classified according to size), d. Ground floor of stores and shops, e. Offices, f. Loft buildings, g. Warehouses, h. Industrial properties, i. Vacant properties classified according to use.

We are convinced that the National Association of Real Estate Boards is on the right track in urging its constituent members to undertake this careful, accurate and painstaking ascertainment of conditions in communities throughout the country at regular stated intervals.

Only by such means can over-production of buildings be prevented—an evil which recurs from time to time in the building industry, some times working very serious damages to that industry.

The situation is very similar to our National financial situation before the establishment of the Federal Reserve Bank. Prior to that

time, as everyone knows, the country was visited by serious financial panics which swept the country at recurrent periods. Since the establishment of that system, however, a financial panic in the United States is something unknown.

We predict that if every real estate board in every important center of population throughout the country would adopt the suggestions made to them by the National Association and would make accurate surveys of their land and building supply twice a year, there would be no such thing as over-building, nor would the building industry be visited by recurrent periods of depression. We strongly commend this suggestion not only to the real estate boards of the cities of the country but to the building industry and to the interests that finance building.

THE TARIFF AS A FACTOR IN THE COST OF HOUSING

Samuel Untermyer, who rendered yeoman service in connection with the investigation of the building industry in New York State a few years ago, has recently called attention to the way in which the proposed high tariff on certain building materials will add to the cost of housing. In a letter recently sent to the Senators from New York Mr. Untermyer made the suggestion that President Hoover's Commission on Law Enforcement should include in its inquiry the reasons why the Anti-Trust Laws have become a dead letter, "except as applied to insignificant combinations and to organized labor."

He goes on to point out that these combinations have invaded almost every line of industry and that any concerted and widespread attempt to bring them within the law would so shake our industrial foundations that it has become impossible. The only alternative left, as Mr. Untermyer sees it, is through Government regulation.

He goes on to point out, however, that there is no reason why Congress should encourage monopolies by throwing tariff protection around them, shielding them against foreign competition and enabling them more effectively to exploit the home market, and points out that if the proposed tariff on building materials, particularly on brick and cement, is imposed, and these materials taken off the free list, the way will be open to raise the prices of these commodities and increase the cost of housing. He says:

Brick, cement and the other building materials that are now on the free list are today the subject of trusts and combinations, nationwide and local, the rapacity of which is limited only by the fact that they are now on the free list.

Mr. Untermyer then goes on to show that common brick sold by trade combinations at \$28 to \$30 per 1000 in New York were after im-

portation from Belgium and Holland slashed by American makers to \$15 per 1000. He says:

The evidence showed that domestic manufacturers could land brick on the job in New York City for less than \$11 per 1000 and that at this price there was a substantial profit in the business.

He quotes similar facts with regard to the cement industry.

Mr. Untermeyer has done a very real service to the cause of housing in laying bare these facts. We do not for a moment expect that anything will come of it, for the interests affected are too strongly entrenched.

There can be no considerable decrease, however, in the cost of housing until the cost of the materials that go into the building of a house are very greatly reduced. When that is done and when the cost of labor is similarly reduced, the United States can look for low cost housing—and not until then.

BROOKLYN'S NEW MODEL TENEMENTS

The latest group of model tenements to be erected in New York was opened a few weeks ago in Brooklyn. This new project owes its being largely to the enthusiasm and activity of Louis H. Pink—a member of the State Board of Housing, and, as our readers will recall, the author of a book recently published, entitled “The New Day In Housing”—who has headed a Citizens’ Committee for the purpose of building such a group of buildings in his native city.

The new apartments are located on 4th Avenue, a main traffic thoroughfare in South Brooklyn, and extend on the block frontage from 23rd to 24th Streets, occupying a plot of land about 200 feet by 200 feet in area. The buildings are 6 stories high, 5 stories above some retail shops from which it is expected that substantial revenues will accrue. The buildings are non-fireproof walkups, built in accordance with the tenement house laws, that is, with fireproof stairs and halls and with the cellar roofed over by a tier of fireproof beams.

They contain 164 apartments of 3, 4 and 5 rooms and bath, with a total of 677 rooms. In addition, there are in the cellar social rooms for adults, playrooms, a space for the storage of baby carriages, and store rooms for the tenants and also outdoor playgrounds for the small children and an interior garden. There are 12 shops on 4th Avenue. The rents to be charged average \$10.73 per room per month, ranging from \$9. per room upward. Tax exemption has been secured, which makes it possible to charge these low rents. The average size of living rooms is 135 square feet and of bedrooms 99 square feet. The total

cost of the project is given as \$720,000, or a cost of \$800 per room, including bathrooms and stores, a store being counted as the equivalent of 3 rooms.

Money for the first mortgage was secured from the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company for about $\frac{2}{3}$ of the buildings' cost at 5% interest. The balance of the money has been supplied partly by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. and the rest of it raised by a Citizens' Committee in Brooklyn who have been sponsoring the project. The architect is Andrew J. Thomas, who has developed the building along the lines that have become familiar in recent years. The buildings are to be under the direct management of Walter Kruesi, who at present is successfully managing the Brooklyn hotel for men known as "The Upanin Club". Representation on the Board of Directors of Brooklyn citizens will ensure the cooperation and interest of that community in this important and interesting project.

A STATE'S HOUSING EVILS

IN PENNSYLVANIA

Benjamin H. Ritter, Executive Secretary of the Pennsylvania Housing and Town Planning Association, at a meeting held some months ago at Altoona to consider city planning and allied problems in Pennsylvania, thus summarized the housing situation in that state. He said:

I shall not attempt to enumerate the individual cases where 4 or 5-story tenements, crowded with large families of children, occupy every square foot of lot space, single rooms serving as the home for a family of 5 or 6 people, bedrooms without windows, bathrooms used as kitchens, bedrooms shared by lodgers and children of both sexes, cases where 3 or 4 families are obliged to use the same outdoor vaults, families living in second and third story rooms carrying their water from a spigot a block away. A broad view of housing is not concerned with a single dilapidated house, a defective roof, a flooded cellar, a filthy yard or a windowless room. But I believe you as city planning engineers are interested in the following:

GENERAL CONDITIONS IN PENNSYLVANIA CONTRIBUTING TOWARD HOUSING EVILS

1. Overcrowding of land with buildings and overcrowding of buildings with people.
2. Industrial plants intruding into residential neighborhoods, and dwellings creeping into industrial areas.
3. Dwellings and tenements without any open space on their lots.
4. Miles of residential streets without paving, sewers or water mains.
5. Over a million Pennsylvania people living in "city" homes without sewer connections or plumbing facilities.

6. Cities and towns without sewage disposal plants, emptying most of their raw sewage into public streams. (But 15 of the 42 cities in the state have sewage disposal plants which treat all or a fractional, part of their sewage. Less than a dozen municipalities in the state are completely sewered.)
7. Residential neighborhoods without parks or playgrounds within walking distance of their children.
8. Streets too narrow to accommodate local needs, and streets too wide and too expensive to maintain for the neighborhoods which they serve, causing excessive financial burdens to home owners and tenants.
9. Lots too shallow to adequately accommodate a dwelling for the average family and lots whose excessive depth invites rear dwellings.
10. Small yards and narrow courts causing dark rooms and fire hazards.
11. Old buildings improperly converted into multiple-dwellings and tenements.
12. Slum areas filled with dilapidated shacks and hovels.

This description of conditions in Pennsylvania, a state which is rapidly waking up to the importance of better housing conditions, due to the stimulus of the activity of such men as Mr. Ritter and the Association he represents, as well as to the work which has been going on for some years under the direction of the Bureau of Municipal Affairs of the State government itself, might very well be written as applying to practically every state in the United States.

Pennsylvania is in no way peculiar in possessing these conditions. She is only exceptional in having awakened to their significance and in being resolved to put an end to them.

THE TRUTH ABOUT L'ENFANT

Just as, a few years ago, the admirers of L'Enfant, designer of the city of Washington, rescued his grave from oblivion and transferred his body from that neglected church yard in Maryland to its present commanding position at Arlington where he now lies with most noble prospect overlooking the city that he designed, so now other admirers of L'Enfant have rendered a similar service and rescued his reputation from oblivion.

It was a very happy thought of the French Institute at Washington to publish the original documents dealing with L'Enfant's relations to George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and others at the time that he was developing the plan of the city of Washington.

In an attractively printed volume of 182 pages, published by the Johns Hopkins Press** Miss Elizabeth S. Kite, has presented a number of published, and many hitherto unpublished, documents, now brought together for the first time, dealing with the relations between L'Enfant and the first President of the United States.

The value of the book is greatly enhanced and its charm increased by a gracious foreword by Charles Moore—the Chairman of the National Commission of Fine Arts and who probably has had more to do with the development of Washington according to the L'Enfant plan than perhaps any other person in the United States—and by an article on Major L'Enfant and the Federal City in the form of an "Introduction" by the former French Ambassador to the United States, Jules J. Jusserand.

Mr. Moore's Foreword is so gracious and delightful that we would like to quote it in full, but limitations of space unfortunately prevent. The following brief quotation, however, gives an excellent idea of the nature of this book:

Pierre Charles L'Enfant is now placed in historic relation to the design of the city of Washington. Many myths have gathered about his name, so that it is high time this service should be done him—and us. Miss Kite has accomplished the task by a chronological arrangement of the records. L'Enfant is permitted to speak for himself, during his work, to those with whom he was actually working, giving his reasons for acting when and as he did. As a result he emerges from the record an abler man, a finer character and a greater artist than tradition has made him, and always a gentleman. Actions we have been led to call arbitrary are found to have had justification.

Every student of city planning and every lover of the National Capitol will want to possess this delightful book.

A SUPER-CITY ENVISAGED

At a great meeting held in New York City the latter part of May attended by thousands of people, not only from New York City but from all the region around it, the Plan prepared after 7 years' study and at a cost of a million dollars for the development of the New York Region, comprising parts of the states of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, was presented to the public.

This meeting marked the culmination of a great effort, conceived with a noble purpose and achieved with remarkable skill.

The thanks of the people not only of New York City, but of the whole country as well—for standards of work have been laid down

* *L'Enfant and Washington, Institut Francais de Washington, Historical Documents, The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, Maryland, 182 p. Price \$3 net.*

and a technique developed that will serve the rest of the country in years to come—are due to that handful of men who had the vision to see the need of this great undertaking, and the wisdom to determine to do it. Notable among these should be mentioned, first of all, Robert W. de Forest, who, as President of the Russell Sage Foundation, had both the courage and the vision to devote a large part of the Foundation's annual revenues to this purpose, at a time when it seemed very much like a step in the dark.

Equally responsible with Mr. de Forest, and perhaps in some respects entitled to even a greater share of credit is the late Charles D. Norton, who had pioneered the way in a similar undertaking in Chicago when he was a resident of that city some years ago and who, as a Trustee of the Russell Sage Foundation, presented to Mr. de Forest the desirability of this great undertaking. The scheme had, fortunately, been given its formative direction and its policy developed under Mr. Norton's wise guidance before his untimely death.

With Mr. de Forest and Mr. Norton, great credit should be given Frederic A. Delano, who cheerfully took upon his shoulders the burden of leadership at the time of Mr. Norton's death and who has guided the movement ever since to its ultimate goal.

With these men credit should be given to all their associates having this work in charge. The thanks of the city are due to John M. Glenn, the executive officer of the Russell Sage Foundation, for his sympathetic support and guidance and to Frederick Keppel, the first executive responsible for the conduct of the work, chosen by Mr. Norton. When Mr. Keppel was called to other responsibilities as President of the Carnegie Corporation, the work of carrying on the undertaking was entrusted to Thomas Adams, a Scotsman who had little knowledge of American conditions and slight knowledge of New York.

It is largely due to Mr. Adams' wise intelligence and his tactful guidance as much as to his great technical qualifications, that the plan has been ultimately achieved. It was no light task for a person, not even a citizen of the country, without that background of knowledge of a great city like New York that comes only to those who have lived there all their lives, to have tackled this difficult problem and to have come out where he did.

To Mr. Adams and the staff that he gathered around him the chief credit for the technical results produced must, of course, be given. With them all it has been, not merely a great task undertaken in their various professional fields, but "a great adventure" and a labor of love—a consecration of their abilities and energies to a great public service.

THE PLAN PRESENTED

The meeting at which the plan was presented was so great a success that like some great political gathering it was necessary to provide for an overflow meeting of almost equal volume. The details of the plan immediately commended themselves to the people of New York City. The press responded in significant fashion and the account of the meeting was "a front-page story" in every important Metropolitan daily. Not only were pages of space given to it at the time, but for several days after the meeting the papers continued to publish numerous details with maps and charts showing what the plan involved for the future New York.

Prior to this great meeting, the Committee for a 6 months' period prior to that time at intervals of 2 or 3 days, had sent to the New York papers a series of releases on various aspects of their approaching Report, including such subjects as a report on population in which it was pointed out that the Region as a whole is not densely populated, and that consequently congestion is not necessary; on the Port facilities of New York and its relation to transportation and food costs; on dangerous tendencies observable in the development of the suburbs around New York and the tendency to overbuilding in those areas; a report on the occupations of the people in the New York Region; on the negro population of New York; on children employed in industry; on the possible redistribution of population throughout the Region now badly congested in some portions of it and with sparsely settled areas in others; on the declining birth rate and the reason for it, as well as other factors regarding the growth of the Region; on some governmental problems involved in the Region; on the desirability and necessity of zoning; on land values; on financing the cost of public improvements; on public improvements themselves; on refuse disposal; on the supply and distribution of commodities; on the prison system of the city.

It is not strange, with this intelligent and wise education of the press and the community, that when the Committee's Plan was finally launched it should have found a public ready to receive it.

This public reception of the plan is in itself eloquent testimony to the efficacy of the efforts which this group of men has been making during the past 7 years. For, they rightly recognized at the inception of their work that their problem was as much a process of education of the people in the cities embraced within the Region, as it was to develop a technical plan of transportation or traffic ways or the other features of the physical improvement of this great area.

The proposed plan as shown in maps, reports and pictures and explained by the speakers on this occasion, represents the first compre-

hensive birds-eye view of the New York Region in the year 1965, when its population, it is estimated, will have increased from 10,000,000 to 20,000,000 people and its present systems of highways, railways and suburban rapid transit will have been dwarfed by spectacular new developments.

WHAT THE PLAN IS

It covers not only New York City but all of Long Island and territory in the states of New York, Connecticut and New Jersey lying within a radius of from 40 to 50 miles from the New York City Hall and dependent upon the metropolis for shopping, working and recreation. This area includes 421 separate communities and contains 5,528 square miles. It is as large as the entire State of Connecticut, four and a half times as large as Rhode Island, and 250 times as large as Manhattan Island.

Over this vast region, which the Committee believes to be so closely bound together by common interests that it must be treated as a unit, the new Plan spreads a network of hundreds of highways, parkways, trunk line extensions, and rapid transit lines, tying them together with new bridges and tunnels wherever necessary and interspersing them with new parks, playgrounds and aviation fields. These enterprises, it is proposed, shall be scheduled for completion prior to 1965. They are part of a programme under which it is expected that 20,000,000 people will be able to live more comfortably in the Region than 10,000,000 do at the present time.

The essential feature of the Plan, it was announced, is the spreading out of the population over a wider area, with industries, stores and recreation facilities so arranged that the existing congestion in the central parts of the metropolis will diminish or disappear.

Though no figures were given out as to the cost of carrying out the Plan it is believed that they will run into the billions. It is pointed out, however, that they will probably not exceed the cost of emergency measures which would have to be taken to meet the needs of the growing city if no general plan existed, and that in the long run they will undoubtedly result in large economies for the Region as a whole and for every community affected.

The general appearance of the Plan as laid down on the map, is of a series of concentric circles, barred like a huge gridiron, but with the grids large enough so as not to impose a close rectangular system of layout. These represent the highways, parkways, railways and rapid transit systems. They are laid out with the idea of enabling residents

to go from one outlying section to another without passing through the congested portions of the city as well as to give easy access to the central sections. In each case the Region has been treated as a unit, though many improvements are suggested which concern only the borough, county or community within which they lie.

The plan assumes that Manhattan will remain the population center of the Region, but that it will be closely rivalled by the Western tip of Long Island and the communities on the West bank of the Hudson. It is expected that New Jersey will grow with great rapidity when its transportation facilities are developed and its waste lands, prominent among which are the Hackensack Meadows, are reclaimed.

Studies made by the Committee show that about two-thirds of the railway passengers brought into the city are commuters. The remaining third, numbering at the present time nearly 100,000,000 annually, will have increased to about 270,000,000 by 1965. Freight traffic is expected to grow at about the same ratio.

RAILWAY BELTS AND TERMINALS

To meet this growth, as well as to provide better facilities for existing traffic, the Plan begins by laying down a great outer belt line, passing around the heart of the Region, through New Jersey, Long Island, Westchester County and a corner of Connecticut, at an average distance of about 20 miles from the City Hall. All railroads entering the Region will be connected with this belt line, which will be partly new construction and partly along existing railway lines.

Passenger service will be provided for by great new terminals. New Jersey will have 6 on the inner belt line—at Paterson, Hackensack, North Bergen, Jersey City, Newark, and a point in Clifton southwest of Passaic. Manhattan will have a new terminal in the neighborhood of 178th street and Amsterdam avenue and probably another at 60th street and the Hudson River. The Bronx will have a terminal at 149th street and Mott avenue. Queens will have one near Queens Plaza, Brooklyn will have one near Prospect Park Plaza, and one is planned south of Port Richmond.

By the aid of these terminals and the lines which will serve them a passenger coming into the Region by trunk line railroad will be taken directly, without change of his means of conveyance, to any community in the 50-mile radius. Through travellers will not have to use the other in order to reach their destinations.

MAJOR PROPOSALS OF THE NEW YORK REGIONAL PLAN

- 1—It provides for the 20,000,000 population expected in this region in 1965.
- 2—It includes complete systems of highways, railways, commuters' rapid transit lines, parks and parkways.
- 3—These systems are made up of approximately 500 separate proposals.
- 4—The highway system is made up of circumferential or "belt" routes, and radial roads, together with the necessary connecting links. It connects New Jersey directly with Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx. Through traffic could avoid Manhattan's congested streets almost entirely.
- 5—The railroad plan, if adopted, would make the exchange of both passengers and freight between all parts of the region rapid and economical.
- 6—The commuters' rapid transit system would bring most commuters to Manhattan to within short distances of their work on trains entirely separate from the present rapid transit lines of the city and the through trunk line trains. (There are expected to be 424,000 commuters to New York City by 1935.)
- 7—New bridges and tunnels would carry these lines across the Hudson, Harlem and East Rivers, across the Narrows and New York Harbor.
- 8—The system of parks and parkways provides ample open space and recreation facilities for the huge population to come, in addition to playing an important part in solving the passenger automobile traffic problem.
- 9—These systems of communication, taken together, are designed to provide complete coordinated facilities of transportation and communication between all parts of the region.
- 10—The region covered by the plan includes 5,528 square miles, of which 2,895 are in New York, 2,220 in New Jersey and 413 in Connecticut.
- 11—It includes about 438 separate political units in addition to New York City. There are 22 counties in all.
- 12—The plan has been seven years in preparation, including preliminary studies and publication of reports.
- 13—It has cost approximately \$1,000,000.
- 14—About 150 persons, including leading engineers, architects and city planners, have been engaged in the work as staff members and advisers.

REGIONAL HIGHWAYS

Like the railway and rapid transit systems the proposed highway system for the Region is strung upon a loop, or series of loops. The principal one of these will run at an average distance of about 12 miles from the New York City Hall.

Inner routes will supplement the loops. Three east-to-west crossings, under the Hudson and East Rivers, from New Jersey to Long Island, have been plotted.

Nine (9) north and south routes are indicated. Two of these will traverse Manhattan, following the lines of the West Side elevated speedway, already authorized, and the proposed East Side boulevard.

Twenty (20) "radial routes," extending outward from the Loop, will tap Long Island, Westchester County, parts of Connecticut, the upper Hudson along both banks, Western and Southern New Jersey, and the Interstate park and other recreation areas.

The main routes will be devoted to express traffic and taken as a whole will enable through travel to by-pass the points of greatest congestion.

PARKWAYS AND BOULEVARDS

In addition to the new highways the Committee proposes a chain of parkways and boulevards encircling the entire Region. Thirty-nine (39) major routes are suggested, connecting the important outlying parks and swinging in a great circle around New York City from Long Branch, New Jersey, to the south shore of Long Island. These are so planned as to take advantage of the existing scenic opportunities, following river and shore lines wherever possible and traversing the Watchung and Ramapo mountain chains and the rolling country of Westchester and Long Island.

The Committee calls attention to the fact that new parkways, from 200 to 500 or more feet wide, can often be constructed at less than the cost of widening an existing highway. In addition to this the Committee's studies show that parkways create larger taxable values than boulevards or highways.

The parkway system as a whole will be like a river expanding at intervals into bays or ponds. Widths of a thousand feet or more will be sought where the land is cheap enough to make this possible. The Committee recognizes that the parkway projects are too elaborate to be carried out in their entirety in the immediate future but recommends that land be acquired and held by the public authorities while prices are still relatively low.

PARKS

The Committee's park proposals include an almost continuous ring of open spaces, encircling the Region. Among them are the southern slope of the Highlands of Navesink; the Mount Pleasant Hills, between Morganville and Holmdel, New Jersey; an addition to the Watchung reservation; a part of the Hackensack Meadows, which it is proposed to reclaim for industrial and residential use; Preakness Mountain, northwest of Paterson; Greenwood Lake; a southerly extension of the Bear Mountain Park along the Ramapos; the High Tor and Little Tor, near Haverstraw; Storm King Mountain; an area near the river north of Peekskill; the valley of the Mianus River; an area in the Half Hollow Hills of Suffolk County, Long Island, and another in the Manetto Hills; and the water-courses and bays on the south shore of Long Island.

The recommendations for the more congested centers of the Region are limited by the prohibitive expense of the land in most cases. The Committee points out that the most important remaining park possibility near Manhattan is on the East River islands—Blackwell's, Ward's and Randall's. These three islands together have an area of 500 acres, or nearly two-thirds that of Central Park. It is suggested that Randall's Island might be made into a municipal amusement park; that the greater part of Blackwell's Island might be utilized for games; and that Ward's Island could be turned into a peaceful resting spot, to which a limited number of people would be admitted at a given time. The island parks could be reached from the Queensboro bridge, the Tri-borough bridge, the subways, and from ferries or river boats adapted to the purpose. Boats similar to those operated on the Seine in Paris might be used.

Jamaica Bay is pointed out as affording another opportunity for island parks. There are several dozen islands in the bay. Some are submerged at high tide, but filling does not offer great difficulty.

Other possible waterfront parks are indicated at College Point, Whitestone Point, Little Neck Bay, Flushing Creek Meadows, Rockaway Point, Coney Island Creek, and, on Staten Island, at Great Kills, Fresh Kills and Princess Bay.

The Committee also suggests that the value of water reservations, private golf courses and even cemeteries as "lungs" for the city population be taken into consideration.

LANDING FIELDS

A further source of breathing space, as well as an adjunct to the transportation system, will be the airplane landing field. The Commit-

tee advocates the purchase, as soon as possible, of sufficient land for 16 civil airports, in addition to the 22 airports of all kinds now existing in the Region.

The Committee believes that New York City and its neighboring communities must act without delay if the Region is to hold its own in the air competition of the future.

As a final contribution to the city's breathing spaces the Committee lays great emphasis upon the advisability of encouraging owners of landed estates near the metropolis to keep their properties intact. It also discusses the problem of enabling some of the nearby land to be put to agricultural uses, if necessary by changes in the system of taxation.

The point is made that there is three times as much land within the Region as is needed for all the ordinary purposes even of a population of 20,000,000, and that much of this land, especially on Long Island, could profitably be cultivated if its values were not skyrocketed by real estate speculation.

The key to the Committee's plan for the future of the New York Region, it is emphasized, is that there is and will be an abundance of room if the lines of the city's growth are intelligently planned in advance.

THE PURPOSES IN VIEW

The promoters of the Plan have summarized the object of making the Plan as follows:

To give guidance to the people of the Region and the governing authorities that represent and act for them, to enable them to so direct urban growth in the future that the greatest practicable measure of health, safety, convenience and general welfare will be secured for the inhabitants. This object includes the obtaining of an adequate and well co-ordinated system of ways of communication, a well balanced distribution of land uses and such degrees of order and beauty in the art of building, as well as in the preservation of a spacious natural environment, as will conduce to wholesome living and working conditions.

The Committee points out that the only real hope of achieving these objects lies in the application of preventive measures, particularly in those areas where new developments or extensive reconstruction are likely to take place.

Some of the principles which guided the staff in the preparation of the Plan indicate the nature, at least, of some of the problems that they have had to deal with. In working out a plan for a better balanced system of growth, it is pointed out that they had to have regard for existing methods of growth, habits and wants. These they could not

ignore, nor could they assume that there would be any revolutionary change on the part of the public in favor of a more ideal system of city development. And yet they have acted on the principle of looking at the problems of the city on the basis of what should be, qualified by what is and can be, rather than projecting present conditions and methods into the future, merely because they have wide assent of public opinion at the present time.

A word about the methods employed may not be out of order. Their method was to divide all planning into logically related divisions so as to avoid the confusion of attempting too much in one operation. As a broad elastic outline of proposals the Plan covers more area and deals with more problems in less detail than a more definite city plan would.

Using the Regional outline as a basis, cities and villages within the Region will limit themselves to those features which the law permits them to deal with and will relate such features to those that are outside the scope of statutory planning, such as trunk line railroads, transit lines and purely Regional projects.

The Regional Plan Committee disclaims any purpose of dealing with such related problems as reorganization of government, the detailed planning of buildings, the planning of systems of water supply and sewerage or regulation of traffic. They add that most of these problems, especially those of water supply and sewerage, have had to be studied in their broad features as a basis for planning the distribution of land uses and for making recommendations with regard to methods of treatment; but no specific proposals are to be put forward for developing particular systems.

With regard to housing, it is deemed that Regional and city plans should include proposals regarding such questions as the space to be reserved about buildings for health and recreation, and the distribution or districting of residence areas, but not proposals regarding such details as window space or the planning of rooms. Similarly, proposals regarding traffic should stop short of regulation, but their combined effect should be to provide a basis to enable regulation to be used to the minimum extent and with efficiency in operation.

No conception of the Plan as presented or of the problems involved in it, or of its scope and treatment can possibly be had from any attempted summary of its findings. The plan itself in its entirety and in detail must be studied and restudied. As it is the working chart by which 421 separate communities, involving a population of millions of people, are to be guided in their growth and development during the next 35 years, it is obvious that the only way a proper understanding

of this colossal undertaking can be had is through direct reference to the Report itself.

WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE?

It is announced that the Committee on Regional Plan of New York, as part of the Russell Sage Foundation, will terminate its functions in the near future, probably by the first of the year at the time when its final Report is rendered.

Those, however, who have been working on this important project for 7 years fully realize that their work will go for little unless there is some organization created to make the Plan effective. They know full well that they cannot simply present the result of their 7 years' work to the citizens of New York and say: "Here is a plan for the future development of New York and of all the great Region around it for the next 35 years. It cost us a million dollars to produce it. We have done our part, now it is up to you, the citizens of New York, to do yours and see that the plan is adopted and carried out."

The veriest tyro in public affairs knows that things do not get done in this fashion. It is not strange, therefore, that the chief purpose of the great public assemblage that was held the latter part of May was the launching of a new organization known as the Regional Plan Association Inc. Very wisely those responsible for the decision chose George McAneny to act as the President of this newly formed organization. There is no one in the city of New York who can more fittingly fill this office. Mr. McAneny, for years, through most of his long public career, has devoted himself to the physical betterment of the city. Years ago long before the Regional Plan Committee was formed, he was responsible as a high public official of the city government for the appointment of an official City Plan Commission, of which he appointed the late Charles D. Norton as Chairman.

Mr. McAneny is peculiarly qualified, by temperament, by knowledge, by experience and by inclination, to lead this movement. It is to be hoped that every citizen of New York who has the cause of the future development of that great city at heart will rally around him and flock to the banners of the newly formed Regional Plan Association.

About a month after this great meeting, Mr. McAneny, on behalf of the Regional Plan Association, called attention to some 43 city projects included in the Report of the Regional Plan Committee which, in their judgment, should be given priority among the 471 main proposals contained in their Report.

WHAT OF THE CITY?

How necessary the formation of a citizens' committee is to stimulate public officials to action, to coordinate their efforts and to furnish a channel through which public sentiment may make itself manifest, is illustrated by the situation that exists in New York City at the present time.

Mayor Walker, when he took office 4 years ago, appointed a gigantic Committee on Plan and Survey, composed of some 507 citizens, the purpose of which was to make a survey of the existing needs of the city and formulate a plan for the city's future growth. That Committee, composed of representative leading citizens, after 2 years finally rendered a Report. The chief recommendation that they made was that, as the task was so vast and the problems so complex and difficult, they could only be solved by a permanent body giving its whole time and attention to the subject. They, consequently, recommended unanimously that a permanent City Plan Commission should be appointed as part of the official machinery of the city government, to concern itself with these vast problems.

That recommendation was made almost 2 years ago. While the Mayor announced his hearty accord with the recommendation and stated in no uncertain terms that he considered the subject of City Planning the most important one before the city government, it is significant that no action was taken by the Administration until nearly a year later. Last Winter legislation was formulated, amending the charter of New York City in several slight respects and providing for the appointment of a permanent city plan commission as part of the city government.

Immediately, this proposal met with a storm of political opposition, some of the Borough Presidents being quite unwilling to lose any of their existing powers, and none of them wishing to surrender control, as they saw it, over the important subject of contracts for vast public improvements.

As a consequence, the Mayor at once became politically embroiled with important associates in the Board of Estimate and Apportionment and the result was that no legislation ensued. Since then nothing has been done. The people of New York City today are not one step nearer the appointment of a City Plan Commission than they were 4 years ago, when Mayor Walker took office.

Singularly enough, it has been within the power of the Mayor to appoint a City Plan Commission at any time, without further legislation. For under existing law he has ample power to create such a body.

New York is practically the only great city in the country that is without a permanent City Planning Commission. There is probably no city in the country that needs it more. It is to be hoped that the new Administration that takes office next January, whether it be Mayor Walker's or someone else's, will act under existing law and will realize that the biggest thing that can be done, both politically and practically, for the benefit of the city of New York, is the appointment of a competent City Plan Commission, freed from the blight of politics, with hands untied and able to take up the city's various physical problems and present a well coordinated and comprehensive plan for meeting them.

If politicians were statesmen the New York Regional Plan Report would at once be taken bodily over.

In the meantime, New York is going on very much as it has in the past, it is projecting thousands of millions of dollars worth of great public improvements, many of which are unrelated to each other, and few of which are related to a comprehensive plan.

The one hopeful element in the situation is that this situation cannot go on much longer. It will break down of its own weight.

THE EXTENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING IN THE UNITED STATES

A helpful little pamphlet of 24 pages has been published by the American Civic Association, giving in outline, a statement of the present situation with regard to Regional Planning in the United States with a foreword by Frederic A. Delano, President of that organization, and a statement and summary by Thomas Adams, Chairman of its Committee on Regional Planning. Copies of this pamphlet can be obtained upon application to the American Civic Association, Union Trust Building Washington, D. C. Price 10 cents.

According to this statement there are over 30 Metropolitan Regions in the United States where rapid urban growth is taking place in the combined forms of more and more concentrated development in centers and more and more scattered and expanding developments in suburbs. The Report points out that at present the Regional Planning movement is confined to some of the large metropolitan regions and then proceeds to list those regions as follows: The regions around

Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Los Angeles, Milwaukee, New York, Niagara Frontier, Philadelphia, St. Paul and Minneapolis, Toledo, Washington, D. C., as well as various regions not associated with great cities.

The Report is a useful document and all students of city and regional planning will find it advantageous to obtain a copy of it.

TWO-LEVEL STREETS

Harvey W. Corbett's prophecy that "we are surely going to have 3-level streets, and that it is not a question of whether we are going to have them, but *how* we are going to have them," seems likely to be realized for 2-level streets in the near future—if not in New York, at any event in Chicago—if the plans of the Chicago Plan Commission for a series of "Super-highways" are carried out.

The Chicago City Plan Commission, established 20 years ago, has been proceeding according to a well thought out logical plan. Its work heretofore has dealt largely with Chicago's street and recreation problems and has been singularly deficient thus far in paying attention to the important subject of housing, a vital part of all city planning. It is to be hoped that the Commission will ultimately give to the housing of the people of Chicago the same study and thought it has given in the past 20 years to making it possible for its citizens to move about the streets with greater freedom and convenience.

Whether the latest plan, which has been prepared by the Chicago Plan Commission, for a series of 6 Super-highways will be carried out in the near future or not, remains to be seen. A serious setback to city planning in Chicago was received in the adverse vote recorded at the municipal election a year ago when vast projects for public improvements were overwhelmingly defeated. That adverse vote, however, was rather evidence of distrust of the existing political administration of the city than opposition to the city planning projects that were put forward for the authorization of gigantic bond issues at that time.

Notwithstanding that adverse vote, the Chicago Plan Commission has proceeded to plan vast projects for the development of the future city.

After setting forth the situation that exists in Chicago's streets with regard to the amount of street traffic, especially of motor traffic, Eugene S. Taylor, Manager of the Chicago Plan Commission, in an article in a recent number of the *National Municipal Review* describes the proposals of the Plan Commission for a gigantic system of Super-highways.

He cites, as illustrative of what the Commission has in mind, the proposed Avondale Super-highway, which he says is one of some six or seven similar improvements that the Plan Commission believes must eventually be constructed, radiating out in fan shape from the center of the city to the municipal borders on all sides and there making contact with the highway systems that have been developed by the state, county and federal governments.

He points out that within an area of slightly over 1,000 square miles northwest of Chicago there are today more than 300 miles of main paved highways, and that these roads all converge near the northwestern city limits of Chicago in a locality formerly known as the town of Jefferson, and that there is no direct, adequate and convenient way for traffic upon all these highways—after it reaches the city limits—to continue its journey on into and, perhaps, through Chicago. The Avondale Super-highway is intended to supply that need. Starting at the northwestern city limits, the plan recommended by the Chicago Plan Commission, contemplates the construction of a Super-highway 210 feet wide and parallel to the elevated tracks of the Chicago, Northwestern Railway, extending approximately 10 miles into the heart of the city, without cross traffic or left turn traffic during the entire distance.*

Other similar Superhighways extending in every direction out of Chicago to the West, to the North, to the South, to the Southeast, and to the Southwest are ultimately contemplated.

That these Superhighways will fill a great need and will facilitate getting in and out of Chicago, there can be no doubt; but whether the citizens of Chicago who have to use the lower levels of such highways, will like it, is another question.

If anyone wants a practical demonstration of the disadvantages of 2-level streets, let him drive his motor car on the lower level of the Wacker Drive and see how he likes it. It is a taste of the infernal regions, dark and dismal.

Chicago is not the only city that is building 2-level streets. New York has taken the plunge and a great Superhighway has been authorized to be built on the west side of New York, estimated to cost \$18,000,000 and to extend for 4 miles.

TWO-LEVEL PEDESTRIAN STREETS

Not only is Chicago to have a series of 2-level streets in the form of Super-highways stretching for miles, but it is also experimenting at the present time with another form of 2-level street, intended solely for use of pedestrians, running from skyscraper to skyscraper.

The first of these, made somewhat tentatively as an experiment, was a bridge thrown across Canal Street, linking the new Chicago Daily News skyscraper to the Northwestern Railroad Terminal. This concourse has recently been continued right through the Daily News Building, emerging on a plaza nearly a block away from the Railroad Terminal.

* See "*Housing*", June, 1928, p. 151.

Recent dispatches from Chicago indicate that about 60,000 persons a day, mostly commuters, use this bridge. It is stated that it has been so successful, both from the standpoint of the convenience of the travelling public and the interests of the building owners, that it is now proposed to carry other streets over and through skyscrapers for a distance of $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to the heart of the Loop—viz., the State Street shopping center.

Practically no opposition to the scheme has developed and traffic engineers declare it a sound plan, applicable to New York and other great cities, as well as to Chicago.

The section of the concourse already in operation is a covered and completely enclosed bridge with glass walls about 20 feet wide across Canal Street, 15 feet above the pavement. It connects the railroad station with a corridor traversing the second floor of the newspaper building. Because it is only used by pedestrians it is not so large as to darken the street below or injure the street for ordinary purposes.

The owners of the Daily News Building have been quick to see the commercial advantage of bringing into their building vast thousands of persons every day and have donated the space thus used to the public, at the same time they have converted what had been designed as space for offices on the second floor into an arcade of shops. Show windows have been built in the walls facing the corridor and retail shops are now paying fancy rents for space. How profitable the venture is likely to be, is evidenced by a statement made by a former President of the Chicago Real Estate Board and one of the largest speculators in downtown realty, who is quoted as saying recently:

Just as soon as I know just where this pedestrian thoroughfare runs, and when it will be completed, I am going to take out options on all available second floor space in the buildings through which the concourse runs. I figure that shops facing the concourse will increase the rental income from such space 4 times.

It will be interesting to see how this plan works out in Chicago. If it proves profitable, as it seems likely to do, there is no doubt that the idea will be extended in further directions.

IS ZONING A FARCE IN NEW YORK?

New York talks much of its zoning regulations and the New York zoners have a very strong local pride in the fact that New York adopted the first comprehensive zoning regulation in the country, but one wonders whether there is really such a thing as zoning in New York,

in view of the fact that under the system there in vogue a Board of Standards and Appeals is constantly modifying and setting aside the zoning regulations in specific cases.

The result is that the great mass of the people think that they have zoning regulations which control the character of their neighborhood; whereas, in fact they are lulled with a false security, for this Board may at any time set aside the existing requirements to suit some particular property owner who wants some particular thing which will be to his interest and against the interest of the community.

As illustrative of the situation that exists, all that one needs to do is to cite the fact that on December 31st, 1927 there were 669 appeals pending before that Board, and that, up to September 19, 1928, a total of 740 more were filed.

To some people this system of special privilege does not seem to indicate that zoning can accomplish much, or is likely to "stabilize values".

A MODEL ZONING ORDINANCE

New Jersey, which is the one state in the union that has suffered most from adverse court decisions in zoning, but which has recently surmounted these by the enactment of a constitutional amendment giving the legislature the power to enact zoning laws, continues to make substantial progress in the zoning field. Not only are the courts throughout the state uniformly sustaining the various zoning ordinances in the litigation which has been brought since the amendment was adopted, but, under the effective leadership of the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, led by Sedley H. Phinney, its Director, a constructive step has been taken in the cause of zoning that is likely to have wider influence and application than to that state alone.

This action has been in the preparation of a Model Zoning Ordinance, prepared by a special Committee of the League, consisting of George S. Harris, of Montclair, Spaulding Fraser of Newark and Walter Ellis of East Orange. This Model Zoning Ordinance has been submitted for criticism to members of the Executive Committee and the Advisory Boards that compose the League of Municipalities, as well as to a number of interested authorities and experts.

In calling the attention of the people throughout the state of New Jersey to the proposed ordinance, its sponsors very wisely say that no zoning ordinance can be drafted that is applicable in all respects to different types of communities, and that the "Suggested Zoning Ordinance"—they, evidently, as others, have avoided the use of the term "model"—merely provides a legal framework which will give

assistance to municipal officials within certain limits. It will make zoning somewhat easier and should prevent legal errors. They add, that it should not, however, be copied blindly.

A word of caution is sounded as to enacting zoning ordinances that are reasonable. The sponsors of the Model Ordinance very wisely say to the municipal officials throughout the state that they are concerned that zoning ordinances prepared under the new statute shall be so drawn as to be well regarded by the courts, and that adverse decisions at this time, if due to unreasonable zoning or improperly drawn ordinances, will cause trouble for all the municipalities throughout the state. Consequently, they urge municipal officials in undertaking zoning to employ the services of zoning consultants, and point out that most of the municipalities in New Jersey that have already adopted zoning ordinances under former statutes have followed this practice.

A word as to the Model Ordinance may not be inappropriate. After a long dissertation on Boards of Adjustment and their functions, powers and limitations, the Model Ordinance then proceeds to set up the usual provisions. It provides for a short title for the ordinance, it enacts a series of definitions, provides for 6 classes of districts, viz. 1-family residence districts, 2-family residence districts, apartment districts, business districts, commercial districts and industrial districts. It contains general provisions with regard to non-conforming uses, accessory buildings, etc., and then takes up in detail 1-family residence districts, describes what they are, has provisions with regard to height and front yards, rear yards, side yards, courts, etc., under each district; has a section dealing with the Board of Adjustment, and finally provides for violations of the ordinance and penalties therefor.

The work is a thoroughgoing piece of work and one that will prove of undoubted value to the people of New Jersey as well as to people of other states throughout the country. All students of zoning will be interested in obtaining a copy of this from Mr. Phinney at 34 West State Street, Trenton, New Jersey.

The New Jersey State League of Municipalities is to be highly commended for this important piece of work.

HOW ZONING IS WORKING IN PRACTICE

IN NEW JERSEY

Not content with the somewhat arduous task of formulating a Model Zoning Ordinance to be used by the various localities, New Jersey's State League of Municipalities has recently caused an inquiry to

be undertaken as to the way in which zoning is working in practice in the different municipalities in that state.

To that end, a few months ago, questionnaires were sent to the President, Governor and Secretary of each local Real Estate Board, to the Secretary of local Chambers of Commerce and to the Mayor in each of the 75 zoned municipalities in New Jersey. Eleven main questions were put. These were the following:

1. Would you say that your zoning ordinance was approved in principle by the citizens of your municipality?

Comment: This question was answered in the affirmative by realtors, Chambers of Commerce, Mayors and municipal officials in all of the 75 cities affected, with one single exception where a realtor in the town of Rutherford replied in the negative.

2. Has your zoning ordinance acted to protect the small home owner from undesirable encroachments, such as garages, apartment houses, factories and stores?

Comment: Here again the great mass of the realtors, Chambers of Commerce, and municipal officials in the 75 cities affected, replied in the affirmative. Those replying in the negative were realtors in the 3 towns of Arlington, Bound Brook and Rutherford and the Mayor of Bogota.

3. Has the zoning ordinance stifled proper community development?

Comment: Here again the answers were largely in the negative, though realtors in Elizabeth, Kearny, Maplewood and Paterson, with some qualifications, answered in the affirmative as did the Chambers of Commerce in Linden and Hightstown, and the Mayors of Bogota, Lakewood and Roselle, the latter with some qualifications.

4. Or has it helped normal economic growth by preventing the creation of blighted districts?

Comment: This question was answered in the affirmative by practically all of the groups in all of the towns involved, with the exception that realtors in the towns of Arlington, Bound Brook and Paterson answered in the negative, as did the Chambers of Commerce in Hightstown and Paterson, in the latter the reply being that it was too early to state.

5. Can it be said in all fairness that the passage of your zoning ordinance decreased building activities?

Comment: Here the preponderant opinion was that it had not decreased building activity, though there were a good many answering to the effect that it had. This was notably so from realtors in the towns of Bloomfield, Glen Ridge, Kearny, Maplewood, Nutley, Paterson and Rutherford; from the Chamber of Commerce in Passaic, with some qualifications; and from public officials in Lakewood, Mountain Lakes, Ventnor and Westfield.

6. Did its passage materially slow down the market for selling or renting property?

Comment: Here again the preponderant opinion was that it had not had that effect. However, realtors in the towns of Bloomfield, Glen Ridge, Maplewood and Paterson and public officials in the town of Westfield were of the opinion that it had done so.

7. Did its passage actually depreciate the real value of many, if any, properties?

Comment: Here again the answer was in the negative, though realtors in the towns of Maplewood, Nutley, Palisade, Paterson and Summit and public officials in Mountain Lakes and Westfield were of opinion that it had depreciated values.

8. Has zoning stabilized and enhanced real estate values?

Comment: Here again the preponderating view was that it had had this effect, though realtors in 4 communities, viz., Bound Brook, Maplewood, Palisade and Paterson, and public officials in Bogota, Lakewood and Ventnor were of opinion that zoning had neither stabilized nor enhanced values.

9. Have the amendments to your zoning ordinance been drastic or arbitrary enough to create a feeling of instability on the part of property owners?

Comment: Here again the preponderant opinion was that it had not had such an effect, although realtors in Maplewood, Jersey City, Paterson and Rutherford and public officials in Bogota, New Brunswick and Westfield thought that it had.

10. Has the Board of Zoning Adjustments, in general been fair and reasonable in its rulings, at least in popular opinion?

Comment: Here the preponderating feeling was that the Board of Zoning Adjustment had been fair and reasonable, though realtors in 3 towns, Kearny, Jersey City and Palisade, and public officials in Bogota thought it had not.

11. In general, would you say that zoning was a real benefit to your community?

Comment: Again the replies in support of zoning were overwhelmingly for zoning, though realtors in 4 communities, viz. Arlington, Maplewood, Paterson and Rutherford, were of the opinion that it was not of benefit.

It is interesting and significant that only 23 localities out of 75 involved in the inquiry had any negative reaction whatever to zoning laws and some of these to only some slight aspect of them. All students of zoning will find a study in detail of the returns to this questionnaire well worth while. Copies can be obtained from Mr. Phinney at 34 West State Street, Trenton, New Jersey.

ZONING ACTIVITY IN NEW JERSEY

The interest in zoning in New Jersey since the adoption of the Constitutional Amendment is certainly most acute. New ordinances have been put into effect in Hopatecong and Ventnor. Existing ordinances in Hackensack and Cliffside Park have been revised to meet the new state law, and Zoning Commissions are now engaged in the preparation of ordinances in Camden, Bloomfield, Morristown, Woodbury, Woodbury Heights, Dover, Teaneck, Carlstadt, Morris Plains, Midland Park, Berlin Township and Middle Township. Zoning is also receiving considerable attention in Oaklyn, Absecon and Bayhead.

New zoning ordinances are recently in effect in Morris Plains, Midland Park, Longport, Red Bank and Edgewater Park Township, and complete revisions of existing ordinances are under way in Newark and Bayonne. New ordinances are in process of hearings and final passage in Princeton, Somerville, Flemington, Allenhurst, Hasbrouck Heights, Chatham, Union Township, and Allendale. Progress is being

made in Denville, Rumson, Berlin Borough, Neptune Township, Roseland, Dover, Garfield, Northfield, Oaklyn, Riverton, Seaside Park, Pompton Lakes, Stone Harbor, Carlstadt, Teaneck and Woodbury Heights.

From the degree of activity that is manifest in New Jersey at the present time, it would almost seem as if it might be a desirable thing for all states to have zoning declared unconstitutional, thus necessitating a constitutional amendment that would bring the subject before the people of the state in a dramatic way.

PREVENTING BAD MANNERS IN BUILDING

QUEBEC'S NEW TOWN PLANNING POWERS

A year ago the Province of Quebec passed a new Town Planning Law, which in some respects, is the most far-reaching legislation in the history of town planning on the North American continent. Under the Quebec statute, a Town Planning Commission is provided for the City of Quebec and given control, not only over the location and height of buildings, both public and private, to be erected in that city in future, but over their architectural appearance as well.

The Commission is composed of 5 members, 3 appointed by the Provincial government and 2 by the City, who constitute a jury with veto powers on the design, spacing, location, height and area of land to be covered, the access of light and air and the general suitability of all buildings proposed to be erected. The new Act has been very appropriately termed by Alfred Buckley, the Editor of the Journal of the Town Planning Institute of Canada, "a reaction against bad manners in building" through which new structures are flung up anywhere and everywhere in barbarous disregard of architectural amenity and the rights of the community.

It is very rightly said that the new law, if properly enforced, will mean putting an end to what has been described as "anarchy in building".

In addition to thus controlling all new development, the Quebec Town Planning Commission is also given power to replan those parts of the city of Quebec that have suffered from haphazard development in the past, and to create a comprehensive plan for the future development of the whole city and the Province, with the exercise of necessary zoning powers.

Following the enactment of this statute, the city of Ottawa has been given similar enlarged powers to exercise architectural control over new developments.

Alberta, that great province in Western Canada, under a new town planning law, has given power to a permanent Town Planning Board for the Province to carry out town planning schemes. One of the functions of this Board is "to assist and advise any rural authority in devising ways and means of preserving the natural beauty of the locality and insuring that new buildings and erections therein shall be so designed and located as not to mar the amenities of the locality".

The act takes special cognizance of buildings that are located on highways and permits the making of regulations as to their design, control and construction.

From all of which it would seem as if our neighbor to the north of us was going ahead faster in some town planning matters than we are in the United States.

A DEPARTURE IN ZONING

NEW YORK'S NEW RETAIL ZONE

After several years' agitation, the merchants of New York in the central part of that city have finally succeeded in securing the establishment of a new kind of zoning district, which has been popularly called a "retail business district". In this district no manufacturing is permitted, with the slight exception of manufacturing that may be incidental to a retail business and limited to 25% of the floor space of the building.

The adoption of this new district last April by the Board of Estimate and Apportionment of New York City marks another stage in the development of the zoning movement. For, heretofore, zoning districts in America have been limited to commercial and industrial districts—which, in some cities, have been divided into those for heavy industry and for light industry. There has been no instance where a retail business district has been established as such, until now.

The district in question extends broadly from 31st Street to 50th Street inclusive, and from 8th Avenue to Park Avenue. There are some exceptions, a few jogs into it at one or two points on the east and west, and an extension of the district, following the line of Broadway as far to the south as 23rd Street and extending eastward to the east side of Madison Avenue.

The retail merchants in the district hail its establishment as a new boon to trade. The establishment of the district has the support of such well known authorities as Edward M. Bassett who, upon its establishment, is quoted as having said:

This new district has been under discussion for about 5 years. The name "retail zone" was attached to it some time ago, but it might have been more accurately called, a "merchandising area" because the regulations allow wholesaling as well as retailing.

Mr. Bassett considers this a step in advance making central Manhattan a high-class merchandising emporium for the whole nation.

The difference between the ordinary business district and this retail district is found in the fact that under the New York Zoning regulations in ordinary business districts 25% of the floor area may be used for light industry, while in unregulated, unrestricted or unclassified districts, the whole floor space can be used for either light or heavy industry. In the new central retail district just established, only 5% of the floor space can be used for manufacturing articles to be sold at wholesale, although 25% may be used for making goods which are to be disposed of at retail on the premises.

HOW CAN ZONING BE STABILIZED?

Zoning, which when it was first inaugurated was advocated as a means of stabilizing real estate values and of fixing neighborhoods doesn't seem to work out that way in practice. As soon as individuals find zoning restrictions working against their desires with regard to the development of their property, or preventing them from speculating in property that would otherwise be profitable, they naturally use every method to overcome this obstacle. First, they try application to a Board of Appeals to see if they cannot persuade that body to allow them to build something which the zoning ordinance forbids. Failing in this, they then train their guns upon the city officials and start a well organized movement for a change in the zoning regulations and in the district lines.

How adversely this is working in some cases in New York was pointed out some months ago by Edward M. Bassett who characterized these real estate speculators as "zoning bootleggers" who, according to Mr. Bassett, would destroy restricted residential districts and would "Harlemize" the whole city.

Mr. Bassett pointed out that such speculators are learning that they can buy land in restricted districts and then start a campaign for a change in the zoning map. When the map is changed they can either exploit the detached house district by erecting in it apartment buildings with stores, or else they can sell out at a profit and let some one else do the exploiting. Says Mr. Bassett

This situation threatens to "Harlemize" all of Greater New York. Intensive apartment house construction means more street congestion, less light and air for each home and less favorable conditions for bringing up families. Those families

desiring more open surroundings are driven away from the city. After a section is solidly built up, the demand arises for more parks and playgrounds. These are eventually established through condemnation—an economic waste—and with the taxpayers' money.

Mr. Bassett very rightly says that if the city authorities would stand for proper stabilization of Zoning there would be no attraction for these speculators. It is the too easy yielding of the Board of Estimate to the insistent urging of this class of "Zoning bootleggers" that brings about the constant changes in zoning districts.

Mr. Bassett particularly deplores the changes from the open districts, technically termed the "E" and "F" Districts, so as to permit more intensive occupation of the land. In the "E" Districts, under the New York regulations only about 35% of the land can be occupied and in the "F" Districts but about 27%. These requirements have been relied upon by the framers of the zoning regulations to keep down undue occupancy of the land and to prevent congestion of population. By forcing private owners to leave these large open spaces in the form of gardens, front yards, side yards and back yards for their own use, an open district is established with breathing spaces which otherwise the city would have to provide in the form of open parks at great expense to the taxpayer.

Mr. Bassett points out that while Manhattan has no such districts, Brooklyn has 43 of them, Queens 39, the Bronx has but 4 and Richmond has but 4. As an illustration of the current trend, Mr. Bassett cites a proposed change of the Shore Road district in Brooklyn, in the Bay Ridge Section, from an "E" to a "C" zone. That would mean that instead of being permitted to build on only about 35% of the land, the builders could build upon 70% of the land.

We think that New York is reaping what it has sown. We have long believed that the New York Zoning Regulations were singularly deficient in not establishing private residence districts. Mr. Bassett's reliance upon the "E" and "F" districts, to secure private residence development and to keep out apartment houses through the limitation of the amount of land that can be built upon, we have always felt was a slender reed.

Experience is evidently proving that to be the case. The remedy is to do what other cities have done, viz., establish private residence districts in which no apartment houses can be built. This would preserve the character of private residence districts and is really the only thing that will do it. We believe with such districts once established, that the local authorities would hesitate greatly to change a private residence district into an apartment district, whereas they will much more readily yield to pressure to change a district from an "F" to an

“E” district or from an “E” to a “C” district, where all that is involved in their minds is a difference in the percentage of lot that may be occupied. There is a psychological factor in this that has been overlooked.

The whole situation illustrates, however, the difficulties in zoning—in fact one might say the difficulties of Democracy. Again and again we find in all our cities the public authorities yielding to public demand, or what they fancy is public demand, irrespective of sound principles.

The voice of the people is not always the voice of God. Too often it is the voice of self-interest.

PRIVATE RESTRICTIONS SOMETIMES BETTER THAN ZONING

In contrast to these difficulties that we have just referred to, recent decisions of the New York courts indicate that, sometimes, private restrictions are more effective than control of a district through a zoning ordinance. For, if the restrictions are properly established the courts frequently will not change them; whereas the local authorities are often apt to yield to the pressure of private interests, which so often they charmingly describe as “public sentiment”.

Two recent cases in New York afford striking illustration of this fact. One of these was an attempt made in the Murray Hill District to have the courts remove property restrictions on property located at 40th Street and Park Avenue, so as to permit the property to be developed with an office building. A group of real estate speculators having their eye upon a particularly valuable piece of property at this location, have used every means to break down the residential character of the neighborhood and to put the land to uses that will be most profitable.

A similar situation developed recently in Forest Hills, Long Island, at the model Garden Suburb established by the Russell Sage Foundation. Here, in a strictly residential district, a group of speculators sought to erect a \$900,000 apartment house, destroying the private residential character of the district—notwithstanding the fact that people who had bought land and established their residence there did so, relying upon property restrictions limiting the district solely to private residences. We are glad to say that the court sustained the restrictions, so that Forest Hills is likely to remain unspoiled for some time to come.

ZONING PROGRESS IN THE UNITED STATES

More than 37,000,000 people residing in 754 cities, towns and villages, comprising 3/5ths of the urban population of the United States now have the protection afforded by zoning regulations, according to the results of a Survey completed last April by the Division of Building and Housing of the U. S. Department of Commerce. These zoned municipalities include cities, towns and villages of various sizes and types located in all parts of the country.

The progress of the zoning movement is little short of miraculous, when one considers that at the end of the year 1916 there were but 8 zoned cities in the country. In the short period of 13 years this has increased to 754 cities comprising 3/5ths of the urban population of the country. It is an amazing record.

Reports received from all parts of the country indicate a continuing zoning activity in all of the states. New York not only leads with a total of 131 zoned municipalities but also excels all of the other states in the number of municipalities zoned during the year 1928, with 23 new communities zoned in that year. Ohio and Pennsylvania were tied for second place with 6 each, South Dakota and Idaho were added to the States having zoned municipalities when 4 cities of the former and 3 cities of the latter adopted zoning ordinances.

Maryland and Georgia showed progress in county zoning. Prince Georges and Montgomery counties in the former state put comprehensive zoning ordinances into effect in areas adjacent to the city of Washington, D. C. Glynn County, Georgia, adopted such an ordinance applying to its entire area.

Township Zoning in Pennsylvania has shown progress with a comprehensive zoning ordinance adopted by Radnor Township.

The size of the communities that have adopted zoning is of considerable interest. The survey discloses the fact that 56 of the 68 largest cities in the country having a population of over 100,000 according to the 1920 census, have been zoned. Zoning has been adopted in

- 56 cities having over 100,000 population;
- 79 cities having less than 100,000, but more than 40,000 population;
- 86 cities and towns, having less than 40,000, but more than 20,000 population;
- 96 municipalities having less than 20,000, but more than 10,000 population;
- 132 municipalities having less than 10,000, but more than 5,000 population;
- 89 municipalities having less than 5,000, but more than 3,000 population;
- 119 municipalities having less than 3,000, but more than 1,000 population; and
- 97 municipalities having less than 1,000 population.

ZONING ACTIVITIES IN THE DIFFERENT STATES.

Reviewing the subject with regard to state activity, it is found that New York leads all the other states by a substantial margin, hav-

ing a total of 131 zoned municipalities. New Jersey is second with 84 places zoned; California, third with 73; Illinois, fourth with 71; Massachusetts, fifth with 62; Pennsylvania, sixth with 43; Ohio, seventh with 41; Michigan, eighth with 31; Wisconsin, ninth with 30; and Kansas, tenth with 23. Then follow Connecticut and Indiana, 17 each; Iowa, 14; Florida, 12; Rhode Island, 9; Missouri and Virginia, 8 each; Nebraska and Oklahoma, 7 each; North Carolina, 6; Colorado, 5; Alabama, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Tennessee, 4 each; Georgia, Idaho, Maryland, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Oregon, Utah and Washington, 3 each; Arizona, Arkansas, Kentucky and Maine, 2 each; and Delaware, District of Columbia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nevada, South Carolina and Texas, one each.

Not all of the 754 municipalities that have adopted zoning have adopted what has come to be known as comprehensive zoning ordinances, viz. ones that regulate use, height and bulk of building. Only 475 communities have adopted this type of ordinance; 279 zoning ordinances, chiefly control the use to which buildings and premises can be put. Some only control height and others only area.

Students of zoning who wish to consider this subject in further detail can obtain copies of this Report on application to the Division of Building and Housing of the U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C.

ZONING DECISIONS

An interesting and valuable pamphlet bearing this title, prepared by Edward T. Hartman, has been issued by the Massachusetts Federation of Planning Boards, in the form of a 40-page pamphlet, known as Bulletin No. 22 issued under date of July a year ago.

The pamphlet, with a brief foreword, contains the decisions of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts—the highest court in that state—on all of the important zoning cases and also contains all of the decisions on zoning handed down by the United States Supreme Court.

The method of presenting the decisions has been to print significant extracts from each and then to ask questions bringing out by this method the determination of the courts. We cite a few of these questions as illustrative of the way in which the subject is handled. Under the famous Advisory Opinion of the Justices, rendered to the legislature under the Massachusetts system, the following questions are asked and are then answered by the terms of the decision:

May dwellings be prohibited in industrial districts?

Are districts for dwellings only legal?

How far may existing buildings be regulated?

Are zoning laws constitutional?

Is a person who builds under the law entitled to the protection of the law?

All students of zoning will find this pamphlet both interesting and profitable to have.

SHALL THE CITY PLANNING MOVEMENT LANGUISH?

An attempt has recently been launched to put the city planning movement on a better foundation. It certainly needs it. When one considers the limited means which that movement has heretofore had, and its remarkable accomplishments with limited resources, one is amazed to think that some philanthropist has not, long before this, seized the opportunity to underwrite a large part of its cost until it can get on its feet and have general nation-wide citizen-support.

Although the city planning movement has existed as a national movement in this country for over 20 years, it has never had a chance for its life—never had a chance to expand, to flower and to do the work that is crying out to be done. It has only been kept alive by the devoted service and support of a limited group of professional men who have cared so much about the Cause that they have made great sacrifices to keep it going.

Recognizing the need of putting the movement on a firmer basis, those active in it have recently formed the American Planning Foundation. Its purpose is to do for the city planning movement what other national organizations have done for other similar movements to serve as a center of information on all aspects of city planning; to develop a research department; to collect, analyze, and coordinate data and information with regard to city and regional planning; to establish a publicity and promotion department, so that a well conceived comprehensive plan of public education on all aspects of city planning may be carried out; to stimulate the formation of planning agencies where such organizations are needed; to assist them in arranging, forming and promoting local planning programmes; to provide counsel, suggestion and programmes for the local financing and support of planning agencies; to guide public opinion by sound publicity. In a word, to make the city planning movement 100% effective, instead of 10% effective as it is today.

In order to accomplish this, the American Planning Foundation is seeking contributions of any size from the smallest to the largest. Starting with a modest budget—too modest we fear—which it hopes however to expand, an Advisory Council has been appointed which includes among its members many of the leading city planners of the country, and also includes others who are not city planners but who are leaders in the industrial world or makers of public opinion through the press.

As describing the aims and purposes of the new Foundation a very attractively printed booklet has been prepared entitled "New Cities For the New Age."

It is not intended that the new Foundation shall supersede the American City Planning Institute or the National Conference on City Planning. It, of course, expects to coordinate and work with both of these organizations, and that result is assured because of the appointment of Flavel Shurtleff, the Secretary of both these organizations, as the executive officer of the new Foundation.

Everybody in the United States who is interested in the cause of city and regional planning should rally to the support of the new American Planning Foundation, and should not only make sure that the quota of support of their community is provided, but should see to it that that quota is exceeded.

We suggest to all public spirited citizens of the United States that here is an opportunity to render aid to a cause for the benefit of the whole country that is unprecedented. By the expenditure of a comparatively small sum of money, results entirely out of proportion will result.

THE LEGALITY OF BUILDING LINES

An interesting presentation of the legal questions involved in the establishment of setbacks or building lines or front yard requirements, will be found in the *Marquette Law Review* of February 1929 by Clifford E. Randall of the Kenosha bar. In this article Mr. Randall reviews the leading cases, notably the Detroit case, *Ridgefield Land Co. v. City of Detroit*, 241 Mich. 468, 217 N. W. 58, the Pittsburgh case, *Appeal of E. J. White et al. City of Pittsburgh*, 287 Pa. 259, 134 Atl. 409, the famous case of *Windsor v. Whitney*, 95 Conn. 357, 111 Atl. 354, and some of the more recent cases, and includes in his presentation of the subject a list of the authorities and of all of the leading cases thus far determined by the courts dealing with this aspect of city planning.

"GARAGE HOTELS"

Two problems that have given city planners much concern in recent years, the problems of parking and of garages, are likely to be solved, if a new type of building which has recently been erected in New York City comes into general vogue—as it seems likely to do. This is the so-called "parking garage", or what has been described in popular terms as an "automobile hotel".

Close to the mid-town building district in the 42nd Street area of New York a 24-story sky-scraper "parking garage" has recently been

built. Erected on an interior lot 50 x 200 feet, the building makes provision for the parking of 1050 cars. By an ingenious device an electrically driven parking machine is sent underneath each motor car as it is received, where it engages with the rear axle and carries the car in either direction from the elevator platform. All manual handling of automobiles is thus eliminated, greatly, of course, reducing the expense.

With such buildings erected in our cities, two results are likely to follow. The first of these is that cities can, with fairness and reasonableness, enforce anti-parking ordinances with strictness, and thus clear the streets of the chief encumbrances that now serve as the greatest obstacle to traffic movement in all our cities.

It will mean also that there must be a consideration of the garage in relation to zoning, and the "garage hotel" or "parking garage" must be differentiated from the garage which is also a repair shop and where there is much noise, and sometimes odors.

Garages of this "hotel" type, which are not really garages, should of course no longer be excluded from certain districts under our zoning law, for they work no more injury to a business district than would any other business. Whether they should be permitted in a residential district opens up a different question, fraught with difficulties.

CITY PLANNING GONE WRONG

AN ATTEMPT TO PROHIBIT RETAIL SHOPS BY LAW

A realization that there can be too many retail shops in a given district is found in a bill introduced in the Wisconsin legislature last February, which, in effect, would prohibit the establishing of any small shops without the consent of the Commissioner of Banking, who is empowered not only to determine whether the location desired is an appropriate one, but also whether there is need of a further retail shop in that district; and if there isn't, with full power to deny the right to engage in business in that locality.

The measure is an attempt to control by law in meticulous fashion what in America we have heretofore considered should be left to the free play of private initiative. The bill in question was not enacted into law, and we doubt very much if it were whether the courts of Wisconsin would sustain it, as it seems to be violative of the fundamental principles of American government.

The fact that such a measure could be introduced in a legislative body in one of the important states of this country is, however, symptomatic of the realization that is gradually coming throughout the country

that there has been too great a development of retail shops in many communities—both to the detriment of those communities and to the injury of business.

A NEW SYNTHETIC CITY

NANKING

These days when everything is synthetic from gin to silk, it is not surprising to learn of the new synthetic world—capital that is to be developed in the Far East, the new Capital of China at Nanking. At the request of the present President of China, the war lord General Chiang Kai-shek, President of the Nationalist Government, a New York architect and Engineer, Henry K. Murphy and Ernest P. Goodrich, have gone to China to design a new capital to be superimposed on the old mediaeval town of Nanking, a town of 400,000 inhabitants, with its walls still standing as they did in the Middle Ages. It should prove a fascinating opportunity for an architect and city planner.

It is stated that they will plan for a town of 2,000,000 population, making the existing city include Pukow on the opposite bank of the Yangtse-Kiang River. It is to be indeed a modern capital that is to be laid out, with full provision for aerodromes and every modern development. But Mr. Murphy very wisely will not attempt to make another Paris, or London or New York of the Chinese capital. Nanking, when completed, will not be a poor imitation of those cities, but will be essentially a Chinese community and will represent the best that there is in Chinese architecture.

Mr. Murphy is no neophyte either in architecture or in Chinese construction, for he has spent many years in designing public buildings and universities in China, which have taught him that old architectural principles can easily be combined with Western ideas of construction.

Singularly enough, Nanking, when completed, will be the fourth great synthetic capital, and which, in every case, has been developed by an architect who was not a native of the country.

Beginning with Washington, the designer of Washington was a Frenchman, Pierre L'Enfant. The designer of Canberra, the new synthetic capital of the Australian Commonwealth, is an American, W. Burley Griffin of Chicago. The designers of the new Delhi are Englishmen, Sir Edwin Luytens and Herbert Baker. Now, the designers of Nanking, the new capital of China, are two New Yorkers, Henry K. Murphy and Ernest P. Goodrich, who, though gifted with imagination, may not be termed prophets—for, though honored in China they are

not without honor in their own country, both of them being distinguished in their respective fields.

THE OBSOLETE GRID-IRON PLAN

Realtors all over the country are beginning not only to see the disadvantages of the stereotyped "grid-iron" method of developing a community, but are urging their fellow realtors to abandon it and adopt what city planners have urged for years—the gently curving street that discourages through traffic in residential districts and makes it possible to develop a community with regard to the amenities of civilization.

One of the latest developers of suburban property to advocate this type of development is W. Burke Harmon, a developer of national reputation. Mr. Harmon pointed out recently that unless greater skill and wisdom is shown in street planning in many suburban communities, both investors and the community will suffer. He says:

The time has already arrived when the serpentine drive is almost universally regarded as the ideal for a residential neighborhood. A system of winding drives makes a neighborhood far more picturesque and attractive. Such drives discourage through automobile traffic, with its attendant noise, evil gases and speeding that endangers the life of children. Charm of vista and quiet seclusion of atmosphere are perhaps the most valuable assets that a residential community can possess.

In consequence, neighborhoods plotted in this manner are coming to have a definitely higher value than those afflicted with the old checker-board system of streets—a system designed for convenience in a horse-drawn and pedestrian era which no longer exists.

It is true that the checker-board plan allows for a slightly larger area of land which can be sold and built upon. Actually, however, this apparent gain will usually develop into a monetary loss. I am speaking from actual experience. Recently, in plotting the streets for a new community, our engineers informed me that, whereas we could secure 13 lots from an acre of land if we built straight streets crossing at right angles, we could obtain only 11½ lots if an approved serpentine drive system were used.

After some calculation we reached the conclusion that with the improved drive system we could obtain a price for the smaller number of lots which would more than make up for the actual loss in square-foot area; and this calculation eventually proved to be correct. In other words, the buyers—although they paid slightly more for their land than might have been necessary with an old-fashioned street system—have gained greatly.

My own company is so thoroughly convinced of the validity of this analysis that we have abandoned the old system of street planning entirely in all of our new communities, except those on Staten Island. Here we run into the planning system of the City of New York. Although Staten Island is in every sense of the word a suburban area, it is officially a part of New York City proper, and seems destined one day to be blocked off in the same fashion as the rest of the city.

A COUNTY PLANNING BOARD PROPOSED FOR LONG ISLAND

Spurred by the competition of Westchester County to the north of New York City, a joint Committee of the Long Island Chamber of Commerce and the United Civic Bodies of Suffolk County—which covers a very large part of the area of Long Island—has recently made a report to the Board of Supervisors of that county setting forth the desirability of the establishment of a County Planning Board for the county, to take up various problems that confront the county with relation to its physical development, and formulate a comprehensive plan.

This is urged so that the development of Suffolk County may proceed along lines found to be so advantageous and profitable in Westchester County, where—as the Report points out—assessed valuations have risen from \$322,000,000 in 1910 to \$1,500,000,000 in 1929. It rightly says that these latest figures are largely due to planning and the development of Westchester's system of parks and parkways, for which it has expended more than \$47,000,000 during the period from July 1923 to December 1928. Using this development of Westchester County as an object lesson, the Report says:

Suffolk County is facing these questions. How much and what kind of growth shall it foster? Shall it plan to attract the best, or will it take what comes? Shall it create its increase in property valuations or will it permit them to grow unguided?

The Report then proceeds to discuss the situation in Suffolk County with regard to the following aspects of town planning, Traffic and Highways, Village Zoning, Parks—state, county, town, village and local—Waste-lands, Ports and Waterways, Transportation.

As a solution for their problems, the establishment of a County Planning Board to undertake County Planning is urged. The Report points out that not only Westchester county but also Niagara, Erie, Putnam, Rockland and Onondaga counties are now engaged in great planning programmes at county expense, as are several counties in the neighboring state of New Jersey within the New York Region.

In summing up their recommendations, the Committee expresses the advantages of city planning so aptly that we quote it in full:

It will be seen that this whole procedure involves no departure from common practice or common sense. The final responsibility for the conduct of the county's business must rest, as it should, with the Board of Supervisors. They at all times are in complete control of the situation. The Planning Board which we have here proposed is the agency of the Board of Supervisors for the purpose of working out solutions of certain basic problems. It is not an independent body. It involves

no disturbance of any existing administrative machinery. It cannot go off "half cocked". It is, in short, simply a common sense device for the treatment of urgent public problems to which this Board, by reason of its many administrative duties would otherwise find it impossible to give the necessary attention.

Students of City Planning who are interested in the details of this Report can obtain multigraphed copies of it from Meade C. Dobson, Managing Director, Long Island Chamber of Commerce, 20 West 34th Street, N. Y. City.

COUNTY ZONING

A proposal to establish Zoning by counties in order to take care of the development of communities lying within the same county, is found in a proposal presented to the Illinois legislature at its recent session, in a bill formulated by the officers and directors of the Chicago Regional Planning Association, in cooperation with the Illinois Association of Real Estate Boards, and whose purpose is stated as follows:

1. To co-ordinate the development of cities, villages and incorporated towns lying within the same county, through a plan as to territory lying between or contiguous to such incorporated areas.
2. To protect incorporated communities from non-conforming uses just across the border.
3. To bring into a uniform plan, regulations that may now be imposed by cities upon territory outside of their borders with respect to city plans and location of cemeteries and offensive businesses.
4. To authorize cooperation among counties and of counties with other municipal corporations for the promotion of these purposes.

The bill limits county powers to Use zoning, outside of cities, villages and incorporated towns. It preserves the existing extra-territorial powers of cities with respect to city planning, location of cemeteries and offensive business. It provides for hearings in each township of the county on the original ordinance and amendments to it.

A number of interesting questions have been raised by the introduction of this bill. Among these may be cited the following:

1. Should the proposed law apply to all counties or be limited to counties of a certain population, or to counties having a certain proportion or a certain number of urban inhabitants?
2. Is it constitutional to apply Use zoning to a whole county when a large part of the county is agricultural, and obviously does not need the protection of zoning?
3. Should the law be limited to piece-meal county zoning?
4. Should county zoning extend to other than a Use classification?

5. Should county zoning permit the establishment of set-back building lines?
6. Should a county zoning law be built upon the plan of requiring building permits for all construction within the county, or within the portion of the county affected by the zoning plan?

In a memorandum on this subject issued by the Chicago Regional Planning Association, it is pointed out that if a county zoning plan is to be applied to all county territory, it will be necessary to make it clear that agricultural uses may not be adversely affected.

The Hoover Committee when it formulated the Standard City Planning Enabling Act and Standard Zoning Enabling Act gave careful consideration to this question of proceeding by counties and reached the conclusion that the county was not a desirable unit to use.

It may be that the Hoover Committee was wrong in this view and that the county is a proper and logical unit as a basis of zoning, but the development of county government in this country would not seem to indicate that progress is to be made along these lines.

The proposed measure, we are informed, did not become a law. Whether the Regional Planning Association intends to push it at some subsequent session of the Illinois legislature has not been disclosed. It would be very interesting to see this experiment of county zoning tried out in some state. A practical application of the idea would demonstrate whether the county is the best unit or whether it isn't.

SPECIAL PRIVILEGE—OR JUSTICE

THE TRUE FUNCTIONS OF BOARDS OF ZONING APPEAL

The serious situation that confronts the zoning movement in this country, caused by the setting aside of the law by Boards of Zoning Appeal thus destroying zoning by a whittling away process, is summarized in effective fashion in the Annual Report of the Division of Housing and Town Planning of the Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare.

What is said there with regard to the work of such Boards in Massachusetts, applies with more or less exactness to the work of Zoning Boards of Appeal throughout the country. They say in part:

People do not appeal to the courts for permission to violate laws. They do appeal for justice under the laws. But it is now different with boards of appeal under zoning laws. When a man wants special privilege he appeals, and it frequently happens that the board of appeals grants the appellant exemption from the law. It has also happened

that the courts have upheld the board of appeals, though in many cases it has been otherwise.

It is therefore not out of place to state again the function of a board of appeals. The board is like a court of equity, which passes upon problems in which the law is not, often cannot be, specific. For example, a man has a 30-foot lot between two developed lots where 10-foot side yards are required. He can't build on 10 feet of space, but that doesn't mean that he should be allowed to cover the entire lot with a high building and get all his light and ventilation from his neighbors. They have rights and the community has rights. In such a case an appeals board should permit the man to build a bungalow, 20 feet wide, with the gables fronting the street and the rear yard so as to protect the others in their light and ventilation.

Such a variation overcomes a physical difficulty and prevents an unnecessary hardship, and yet protects the intent and purpose of the law. It is a variation under the law and within the meaning of the law.

When an appellant seeks to put a 155-foot building in an 80-foot district, or to put a store in a residential district, or to cover more than the allowed percentage of a lot simply to make more money, he is appealing for a special privilege, for permission to steal when the law says he shall not steal. No board with any proper sense of its function would grant such a permit. No court that looks to the results and its own peace of mind will uphold a board in such a decision. For if it is done for one, why not for all? And it is the function of neither a board of appeals nor a court, nor of both combined, to repeal laws.

In spite of this, seemingly intelligent men will ask, "What good is a board if it can't do such things?" A Yankee's reply should be, "What good is it if it *can* do such things?" Such boards are intended to meet special situations and see that justice is done—justice to the neighborhood and the town just as much as justice to the appellant. To grant exemption from the law is the crime of violating the law. If the law is wrong it is not for the board of appeals to nullify it. A court may nullify a wrong law or a wrong application of a law. The only way a community can remedy a wrong law is to repeal it or amend it. It isn't the business of a board of appeals to amend a law. There is a legislative body in every jurisdiction.

No man has a right to appeal for exemption from a law. If he does so he should be denied. He has a right to appeal for a variation under the law and within the limits of the law when, in a specific instance, he can make no reasonable use of his property except with such a variation. While law enforcing bodies fail to see this, untold damage will continue to be done.

A REALTOR CHAMPIONS ZONING

Philadelphia, one of the few great cities of the country that has not as yet adopted zoning has been the center of a well organized opposition to zoning generally, on the part of a very small group of men,

some of whom have large real estate holdings of great value, and who have also had great political influence.

One of the men who has most actively opposed zoning in Philadelphia for many years past is Horace Groskin, a Philadelphia realtor. Some time ago Mr. Groskin made an address at Allentown Pennsylvania against a proposed zoning ordinance, the topic of his address being "Zoning Restrictions A Menace to Real Estate Values". His address was later published in the *Philadelphia Real Estate Magazine*.

Answering the statements made by Mr. Groskin, Thomas Shallcross Jr. former President of the Philadelphia Real Estate Board, former President of the National Association of Real Estate Boards, one of Philadelphia's leading realtors for most of his life, and now actively associated with one of the leading banking firms in that city, replies to Mr. Groskin's attacks on zoning with a spirited defense of the zoning movement, from the point of view of the realtors of the United States.

While space does not permit us to quote Mr. Shallcross's remarks in full we give the following extracts from them as they are such striking testimony to the value of zoning to the real estate interests of the country. Mr. Shallcross said in part:

In looking over the United States, and with a rather intimate acquaintance with the leading realtors and developers of the country, I make no apology for the company that I am classed with, as I find that practically all of the worthwhile and outstanding men in our profession, if such it may be called, are ardent advocates of sane zoning regulations, and I have yet to find a successful real estate developer who has been willing to hazard his own resources in unrestricted or "unzoned" enterprises. * * *

Not only the outstanding realtors, but the local Real Estate Boards in most of the cities that now have zoning laws, worked hard for the passage of these laws and today their members give enthusiastic testimony as to the benefits that have been derived, and particularly to the stabilizing influence that the laws have had on values generally, and to the benefit to the brokers. The uncertainty of the future having been largely removed, a large percentage of the sales resistance is eliminated.

Practically the same arguments that are used by Mr. Groskin against the modern thought and practice of zoning could be used with equal force against a hundred other modern laws and regulations that the public are accepting and welcoming as being beneficial, and, in fact, necessary under our present civilization.

When this country was a wilderness, and the first settlers on these shores established their farms, workshops and villages, there seemed, of course, to be no zoning problem, but we all have been witnesses to the many errors that have been made as these villages expanded and became towns and cities. It is, of course, too late to either remedy or

discuss these errors, but the efforts of those of us who believe in zoning regulations can be directed against a continuation of these errors by taking our lesson from the past.

It is also true that these early settlers had no "left-hand turn" problem. The ox-cart, stage coaches and pony express riders were able to navigate without serious congestion, and with very few collisions. Today traffic is so increased, and congestion is so acute at places, that we all accept traffic regulations by statute and police authority that could as readily be complained of as a "socialistic disease of control and regulations," as can zoning.